

THE  
CORNHILL MAGAZINE.

OCTOBER 1896.

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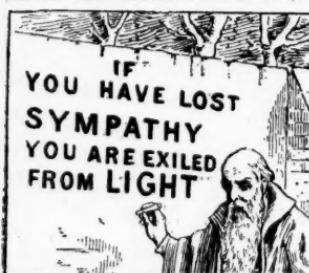
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THE  
**CORNHILL MAGAZINE.**

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OCTOBER 1896.

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*TRAFAVGAR FROM THE SPANISH SIDE.*

*AN ANNIVERSARY STUDY.*

BATTLE OF TRAFALGAR, OCTOBER 21, 1805.

IF there be one thing whereon, more than on any other of our characteristics, we Englishmen pride ourselves, it is our superiority to legal prejudice. We hold every man innocent until, by process of law, he be proved to be guilty ; we treat with equal impartiality the native and the alien litigant ; we are ready in our courts to hear all sides, and we despise any judgment based only upon *ex parte* evidence. But if, in our law courts, we treat the foreigner as the Briton's equal, we do it, not because we really believe him to be so, but because we desire to demonstrate the purity and scrupulous fairness of our justice. In truth, we do not care what happens to the foreigner. Nothing is probably too bad for him. But we do care what happens to our own reputation.

Outside the law courts we are less fettered. There the foreigner is a person whose words and opinions, though received, perhaps, with conventional politeness, really count for absolutely nought. Thank heaven, it has not yet ceased to be with us a cardinal principle that a Briton is, in every respect, a better creature than any other man on earth. This is why we are generally content to look at our history and progress from our own point of view only. We do not often deign to admit foreigners to the honour of assisting us in the formation of our national verdict upon any subject that touches our interests. The researches of a Duro may have helped to modify the conclusions of a few bookworms concerning certain episodes in the proceedings of the Spanish Armada ; but,

happily, they have not influenced our school-books, our cheap histories, and our popular opinion. We rightly turn up our insular noses at a French, a German, or a Belgian version of the story of Waterloo. We do not go so far as to deny that Frenchmen, Germans, and Belgians were present at the battle, and that they participated in some of its incidents; but, even so, what value, we want to know, can possibly attach to the evidence of persons of such inferior mental calibre, such very un-English habits of thought, and such notorious untrustworthiness?

There is another, but subsidiary, reason why we do not commonly suffer foreign conclusions to influence British verdicts. People upon whose flag the sun never sets need not be great linguists, and it is unfortunately a fact that the majority of foreigners who have rashly ventured to deal with affairs that in any way concern us have foolishly elected to write in language which most self-respecting Britons do not condescend to be acquainted with.

Far be it from me to suggest that, as a matter of duty, we should either admit any foreigner to be worthy of the slightest credence, or incommodate ourselves to the extent of learning foreign languages and reading foreign books. I do, however, incline to think that occasionally we may find it amusing—though some believe that we can derive no useful instruction or suggestion from foreign sources—to glance for a moment at some of the great events of our history through alien glasses; and therefore I make bold, at this season, when the anniversary of Trafalgar is again upon us, to offer to the reader a view of the battle, and of the events following upon it, as witnessed by Spanish eyes from Spanish ships. Since this view does not, wonderful to relate, clash to any considerable extent with accepted British conclusions on main points, and is supplementary rather than contradictory in its character, I need not, perhaps, apologise for giving it. If I had before me some arrogant German contention to the effect that Blücher had a large share in the winning of Waterloo, or some gasconading French claim to the effect that Bridport's action was not a great British victory, it would naturally be my duty to suppress it as being insulting as well as antecedently ridiculous. But this is nothing of the sort. Moreover, it is published in an inoffensive way. Much of it is really history, for it is based upon historical documents; but it appears in the less pretentious guise of romance, the Spanish author, Don Perez Galdós, having, I suspect, the

delicacy to perceive that it would be presumption on the part of any Spaniard to give to the world a set account of Trafalgar, after Englishmen have described the victory.

The supposed narrator of the story of the battle in Don Perez Galdós's book is one Gabriel, in 1805 a lad of fifteen, in the service of Don Alonso Gutierrez de Cisninga, a retired captain in the Spanish Navy. De Cisninga, as the day of the fight approaches, goes on board the *Santissima Trinidad*, at Cadiz, as a volunteer, and takes his servant with him. Gabriel, both before and after sailing, keeps his eyes and ears open, and sees and hears much.

It should be premised that, on August 21, 1805, Villeneuve had taken his fleet into Cadiz, and had brought up the number of the allied sail of the line there assembled to 35. On that day, Collingwood, who was watching the port, had but four sail of the line with him. On the 22nd, this force had been doubled by the arrival of Bickerton's squadron of four ships: but the observing fleet had remained very small until the end of the month, yet Villeneuve had not seen fit to go out and attempt to destroy it.

Writing of the situation in the early days of October, Gabriel says: 'There is much talk about our naval officers being dissatisfied with the French admiral. His fear of the English is so great that in August, although the allied fleet was already assembled, he would not trust himself to attack Collingwood's little squadron that was cruising in the offing. . . . Our officers are beside themselves at the idea of having to serve under the orders of such a man. Gravina' (the senior Spanish flag-officer) 'went to Madrid to consult on the subject with Godoy, and to inform him that we are doomed to a great disaster unless another Commander-in-Chief be appointed. But the Minister, as usual, confined himself to words, the fact being that he dares not act upon any decision of his own. . . . Only fancy, when Villeneuve's ships arrived they had neither food nor stores, and the people in the arsenal would give them nothing. Villeneuve hastened to Madrid; and as Godoy dances only to the piping of M. de Bernouville, the French Ambassador, he naturally ordered that the French should be given what they needed. Yet still they obtained nothing. The directors of the Arsenal and of the Ordnance declared that they would not hand over anything unless Villeneuve paid for it at once in honest cash down, and everyone thought that that was an excellent attitude to take up. Otherwise

these gentry would have no trouble in depriving us of the little that remains to us.

The jealousy and bickerings between the allies, instead of decreasing as the hour for action approached, grew worse. The Spanish party desired to see Don Federico Gravina, a tried veteran, or, still better, Don Cosme Churruca, the most scientific and energetic officer in the service, placed at the head of the combined fleets. Here is Gabriel's portrait of Churruca, who, a little later, fell gallantly in the *San Juan Nepomuceno*: 'He was a man of about forty-five years of age; his face was handsome, its expression was sad; it was impossible to look at him and not feel sympathy for him. His thick, fair hair was carelessly gathered into a great knot, and thickly powdered, as was then the fashion. His eyes were large, and blue in colour; his nose was delicately shaped, of good form, and rather long. His pointed chin increased the melancholy of his oval countenance, which indicated gentleness rather than energy. This noble exterior was improved by a perfect figure, and by a distinguished courtesy such as in these days, when the canons of politeness are so confused, one can form no idea of. His body was not of powerful build, and he appeared to be in ill health. He rather resembled a man of learning than a soldier; and his high forehead, behind which deep and lofty thoughts lay hidden, struck one as little suited to affront the rude shocks of battle. And yet, as I discovered later, this man's courage was in no wise inferior to his intelligence. He was Churruca. The hero's uniform, without being exactly threadbare, betrayed that it had seen many a year's honourable service. I afterwards learnt from his conversation that the Government owed him nine years' pay. . . . "The French Admiral," said Churruca, "does not know what decision to come to, and yet craves to do something that will cast a veil over his past mistakes. He wants us to go out and offer battle to the English. On October 8 he wrote to Gravina to the effect that he desired to hold a council of war on board the *Bucentaure*. Gravina attended, and took with him Vice-Admiral Alava, Commodores Escaño and Cisneros, Rear-Admiral Galiano, and myself. From the French fleet there were present Admirals Dumanoir and Magon, and Captains Cosmao, Maistral, La Villegris, and Prigny. When Villeneuve declared his intention to go out, several Spaniards opposed it. The discussion was lively and warm, and Galiano exchanged with Magon some rather energetic expressions, which

would have led to a challenge if the others had not glossed over the affair. Our opposition did not please Villeneuve, and he let his tongue run loose, but Gravina knew how to suitably answer him. It was strange to find these gentlemen willing to put to sea in search of the enemy, seeing that, not long before, when there had been every chance of victory off Cape Finisterre, they had left us in the lurch. There were also other points concerning which the Council was not united. My view was that, the season being advanced, we could best take advantage of our position if we remained at anchor in the Bay, for we should then have to be blockaded, and the enemy would not be able to keep up a blockade, especially if he also attempted to blockade Toulon and Cartagena. It had to be admitted that the English Navy was better than ours, not only as regards armament, but also as regards construction of vessels, and, above all, in the matter of unity of methods and aims. We had no good seamen on board ; we had bad guns, and, finally, we had an Admiral who inspired no confidence in any of us, so that we could anticipate success only if we remained on the defensive in the Bay. But we shall have to do as we are told, and hand over our ships and men to the discretion of the French."

Gabriel and his master went on board the *Santissima Trinidad* early in the morning of October 18, the day before the sailing of the allied fleets. This vessel, by far the largest and most powerful of her age, had four complete decks of guns. She had been constructed in 1769, four years later than the *Victory*, of wood cut in Cuba, and her length on the gun deck was 220 feet ; her beam, 58 feet ; and her depth, from keel to upper deck, 48 feet. When first built, she had ports for 116 guns only ; but she had been repaired and added to in 1795, and the number had then been increased to 130. In 1805, this colossus carried no fewer than 140 guns. She was then commanded by Captain Don Francisco Xavier de Uriarte, and flew the flag of Rear-Admiral Don Baltasar Hidalgo de Cisneros. Her crew, of 1,115 men, was, says Gabriel, 'composed, half of good seamen, and half of pressed people of bad character, who knew nothing of the service.' Villeneuve—'Monsieur Corneta,' as the Spaniards nicknamed him—was in the *Bucentaure*, 80 ; Gravina, second in command, was in the *Principe de Asturias*, 112 ; Vice-Admiral Alava was in the *Santa Ana*, 112 ; and the Rear-Admirals Dumanoir and Magon were in the *Formidable*, 80, and *Algésiras*, 74, respectively. Rear-Admiral Escaño accompanied Gravina, apparently as Chief of Staff, or

Captain of the Fleet. The allied line consisted of 33 sail, made up of one of 140, two of 112, one of 100, six of 80, 22 of 74, and one of 64 guns. With the fleet were five frigates and two brigs. Outside was Nelson—the Spaniards called him ‘El Señorito’—with 27 sail of the line, made up of three of 100, four of 98, one of 80, sixteen of 74, and three of 64 guns; and with this fleet were four frigates, one schooner, and one cutter.

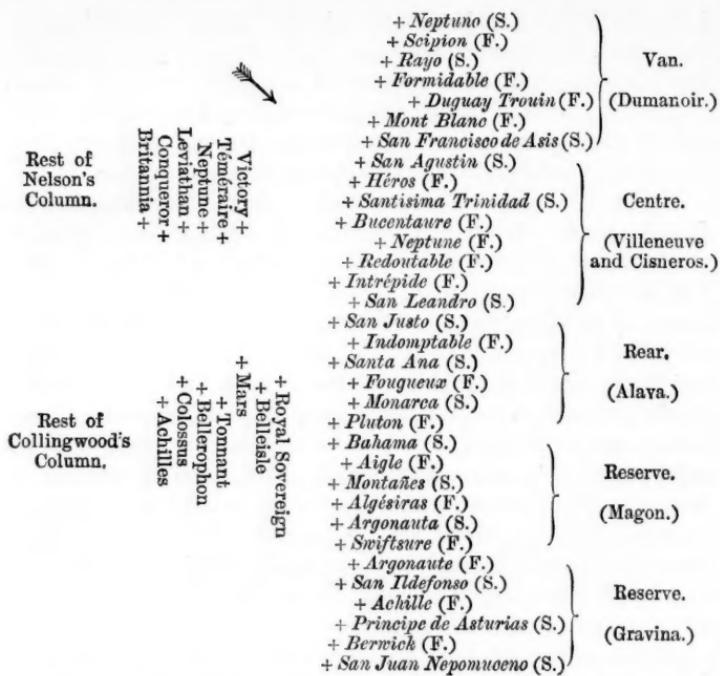
On the morning of the 20th, the whole Franco-Spanish armada was fairly on its way toward the Strait of Gibraltar, making, however, slow progress, there being thick weather and a SSW. wind. Villeneuve had previously instructed his captains that, if the British fleet should be discovered to leeward, the allied line was to bear down upon it together; while, if the British fleet should be discovered to windward, the allies, in close line of battle, were to await the attack. In issuing his directions, the French Admiral betrayed a certain degree of prescience. ‘The enemy,’ he said, ‘will not content himself with forming a line of battle parallel with our line, and so engaging us with his guns. . . . He will endeavour to jeopardise our rear. He will pass through our line, and will endeavour to surround and reduce, with groups of his own vessels, such of our ships as he may succeed in cutting off.’ But although Villeneuve thus foresaw more or less vaguely what was in store for him, he took no measures for confounding the tactics which, he anticipated, would be employed against him. In the afternoon of the 20th, he formed his fleet into five divisions, viz., the van, the centre, the rear, and two reserve divisions. How these were disposed at the moment of the attack on the following day will be shown presently. Gabriel says that the formation was not very readily assumed, owing to the rate of sailing of the vessels varying considerably, and to the ships not being accustomed to manœuvre together. Soon afterwards, a French frigate reported the British fleet to be in sight; whereupon the allies, on the port tack, cleared for action, and, at about 5 P.M., tacked and stood towards the mouth of the Strait. In the evening, the combined fleet wore, and stood to the north-west. Gabriel was stationed near a hatchway, in a line with a number of seamen and boys, and assisted in passing up sacks of sand from the hold. ‘I was astonished,’ he says, ‘when I saw them emptying the sacks and spreading the sand over the decks. . . . To satisfy my curiosity, I asked a ship’s boy who stood next me, why this was done. “It is because of the blood,” he replied. “Because of the blood?”

I repeated; and I could not restrain my terror. I gazed at the sand, and at the seamen, who were chattering as they pursued their horrible work; and for a moment I felt myself to be a coward. But soon my excited imagination drove away fear, and I thought only of victory. . . . The ammunition was passed up from below as the sand had been, and the guns were cast loose.

Before daylight, on October 21, Villeneuve discovered that the British, not very inferior in force to his own fleet, were to windward and not to leeward. He therefore ordered all his divisions to form a close line of battle on the starboard tack upon the most leewardly division, and to steer south-west. After daybreak, at about 8.30 A.M., the French Admiral, perceiving an action to be inevitable, signalled his ships to wear together and form close line on the port tack, so as to bring Cadiz on his lee bow, and to facilitate his escape thither. Previous to this, Nelson had formed his order of sailing in two columns, and had ordered the columns to bear up. The Franco-Spanish line, owing to light winds, unequal rates of sailing, the heavy swell, and the inexperience or incompetence of some of the captains, was badly formed, and at about 11.40 A.M., when Nelson sent up his well-known signal, the position was somewhat as shown on the following page.

From this point Gabriel's experiences and impressions, all founded upon public and private Spanish accounts of eye-witnesses, become more interesting. 'Among the soldiers,' he says, 'I saw many who were seasick and who were clinging to the bulwarks to prevent themselves from falling. It is true there were also some energetic fellows, especially among the volunteers; but the majority were conscripts, who obeyed only because they were obliged to; and I am sure, moreover, that not a single spark of patriotic feeling animated them. Yet the battle made them worthy of the occasion; and, in spite of the very different reasons which had brought these men together, I believe that in the exalted moments preceding the firing of the first gun, every soul on board thought of his God. As for me, I was never in my life so excited as I was then. Though I was but young, I was able to comprehend the seriousness of the occasion. . . . So deeply rooted in my heart was the conviction of approaching victory that I felt a kind of sympathy with the English. I marvelled to see them coming with such boldness to a certain death. . . . A sudden thunder shook all my dreams asunder. The first shot had been fired.'

'A ship of the rear division had fired the first shot at the



This formation does not exactly agree with that given in English histories of the battle. James says that the *Principe de Asturias* was the rearmost ship of the combined fleet, and that the *Santissima Trinidad* was second ahead, and not next ahead, of the *Bucentaure*.

*Royal Sovereign*, in which Collingwood's flag was flying. While this vessel engaged the *Santa Ana*, the *Victory* threw herself upon us. We in the *Trinidad* were all burning to open fire; but our captain waited for a favourable moment. . . . The *Victory* began by attacking the *Redoutable*, and, driven off by her, fell under our lee. Then came the long expected instant; a hundred voices shouted "Fire!" repeating, as if by some infernal echo, the order of our commander; and a broadside of fifty round shot was rained into the English ship. For a few seconds the enemy disappeared behind the veil of our smoke. Presently she reappeared . . . coming right into us. Then she luffed, and sent us her broadside in return; but before she fired it our people had time to note how much damage had been done to her, and their enthusiasm was redoubled. The guns were well, though rather slowly served—a natural consequence of the want of practice of many

of the gun captains. . . The *Bucentaure*, which was under our stern, also fired at the *Victory* and at the *Téméraire*, another large English ship. It looked as if Nelson's vessel were about to fall into our hands. The *Trinidad's* guns had ruined her running rigging, and we saw with delight that she had lost her mizen topmast. In the ardour of this first encounter I overlooked the fact that here and there we had groups of killed or wounded. Having posted myself where I believed I should be least in the way, I kept my attention fixed upon our captain, who, from the quarterdeck, issued his orders with the most heroic coolness. . . . I admit that at certain times I was possessed by an indescribable terror. With very little encouragement I could have taken refuge in the lowest depths of the hold. On the other hand, there were also times when I was seized by a species of mad courage; and then I clambered to the most exposed positions, in order to lose nothing of the great spectacle.'

But the enthusiasm of the *Trinidad's* crew must have soon been cooled; for, ere long, the huge vessel, though relieved from the fire of the *Victory*, was hotly engaged by the *Téméraire* and *Neptune*. 'From the expression of my master's face,' says Gabriel, 'from the wild fury of Uriarte and from the curses and oaths of the seamen, I learnt that we were lost. Our order of battle was broken in several places—the enemy had surrounded us.'

'The scene on board the *Trinidad*', he continues, 'was a hellish one. No attention was any longer paid to the sails. The vessel, indeed, was unmanageable. The energies of all were concentrated upon the business of working the guns as quickly as possible, and of giving the enemy at least as good as he gave us. The English shot had torn our sails to tatters. It was as if huge invisible talons had been dragging at them. Fragments of spars, splinters of wood, thick hempen cables cut up as corn is cut by the sickle, fallen blocks, shreds of canvas, bits of iron, and hundreds of other things that had been wrenched away by the enemy's fire, were piled along the deck, where it was scarcely possible to move about. From moment to moment men fell—some into the sea; and the curses of the combatants mingled with the groans of the wounded, so that it was often difficult to decide whether the dying were blaspheming God or the fighters were calling upon Him for aid. I helped in the very dismal task of carrying the wounded into the hold, where the surgeons worked. Some died ere we could convey them thither; others had to

undergo frightful operations, ere their worn-out bodies could get an instant's rest. It was much more satisfactory to be able to assist the carpenter's crew in temporarily stopping some of the holes torn by shot in the ship's hull. . . Blood ran in streams about the deck ; and, in spite of the sand, the rolling of the ship carried it hither and thither until it made strange patterns on the planks. The enemy's shot, fired, as they were, from very short range, caused horrible mutilations. . . Very few who passed through the battle came out of it unmarked, at least to some extent, by the lead or iron of the foe. . . The ship creaked and groaned as she rolled—and through a thousand holes and crevices in her strained hull the sea spurted in, and began to flood the hold.'

The *Trinidad*'s people saw the Commander-in-Chief haul down his flag ; heard the *Achille* blow up and hurl her six hundred men into eternity ; learnt that their own hold was so crowded with wounded that no more could be received there ; and witnessed the fall of Cisneros. Uriarte was left alone upon the quarter-deck. Then, when all three masts had in succession been brought crashing down, the gallant Uriarte also fell wounded. After he had been borne from the deck the defence collapsed, and the *Santissima Trinidad* struck her flag.

It was about 5.30 P.M. when a party from the *Prince* took possession of the captured leviathan. The battle had by that time practically ceased. The first duty of the prize crew was to endeavour to keep the ship afloat ; for so much water had already entered that the wounded were actually drowning in the hold ; and the Spaniards were too demoralised to help themselves. Under English direction, the surviving wounded were brought up to the lower and lower-middle decks ; the pumps were properly manned, and the carpenters' parties were reinforced. 'I had previously,' says Gabriel, 'watched some Englishmen hoisting the English flag at the *Trinidad*'s stern. If the reader will forgive me for giving expression to my reflections, I should like to say how much I was moved upon that occasion. I had always pictured the English to myself as pirates, highwaymen of the ocean, and scoundrelly adventurers, who could not be called a nation, and who lived by plundering. But when I noted the pride with which they hoisted their flag, and how they greeted it with boisterous cheers ; and when I saw the delight caused them by the capture of a ship which was greater and more famous than any which had up to that day been seen upon the seas, then I seemed to realise

that they also must possess a beloved country, and that to them that country had entrusted the vindication of its honour.'

In attendance on his master, Gabriel had occasion to be in the captain's cabin when the English officers in charge of the prize crew were courteously answering the anxious inquiries of the Spaniards as to the results of the action. 'What has become of the reserve squadrons? What has Gravina done?' asked one. 'Gravina, with a few ships, has got away,' replied an Englishman; 'but we are following up the *Principe de Asturias*, and I do not know whether she will reach Cadiz.' 'And the *San Ildefonso*?' demanded a Spaniard. 'She is taken.' 'And the *Santa Ana*?' 'She is taken, too.' 'I will make a bet that the *Nepomuceno* has not struck.' 'She, also, is taken.' 'You think so? What about *Churruga*?' 'He has fallen,' the Englishman answered sadly. 'Fallen, my God! But the *Bahama* must be safe? She is in Cadiz ere this?' 'No; she has been taken.' 'Taken, too? And what about *Galiano*? *Galiano* was a brave man as well as an able one.' 'True,' said the Englishman, 'but he also has fallen.' 'And what has happened to the *Montañes* and to *Alcedo*?' 'Alcedo has fallen too.'

Such was the tale of wholesale catastrophe told to the disheartened Spaniards, who burst into tears as they heard it. Then succeeded the terrors of a tempestuous night off a lee shore. The sea was so heavy that little could be done towards repairing the damage of the shattered ship. The *Prince* tried to tow her, but was obliged to relinquish the effort, owing to the risk of a collision. The people, who had eaten nothing since the morning, were half-dead with hunger, and tumultuously invaded the bread and spirit rooms. The cold was intense; and the ship, in which lay nearly four hundred dead bodies, had the odour of a charnel-house. In the morning the corpses were thrown overboard. Those of the officers had a few prayers read over them by a priest. Those of the seamen, wrapped in sail-cloth and weighted with a shot at the feet, were put into the water with less ceremony. Nor were there shot enough for all. At daybreak the *Prince* again tried to tow the *Trinidad*, and again failed, for the storm had increased rather than diminished. During the whole of the 22nd, however, the English worked hard in hopes of saving the ship, the most splendid of the prizes. Scattered over the boiling sea were many other vessels, nearly all more or less damaged, and wreckage lay in all directions. Towards night, the *Trinidad* had fifteen

feet of water in her hold, and all hopes of saving her had to be abandoned. It was determined to transfer her survivors to some other vessel. These numbered about five hundred who were more or less sound, besides about three hundred who were badly wounded. At sunset the transfer was begun by means of the boats of the *Trinidad* herself, the *Prince*, and three other English ships. Unhappily, many of the wounded, ere they could be brought up from the lower deck, were drowned there by the rising water. Gabriel and his master found themselves in one of the last boats that got clear ere the ship, still with numbers on board, went down.

In the darkness, the boat, instead of reaching a British ship, was picked up by the *Santa Ana*, which had struck to the *Royal Sovereign*, and which had a small prize crew on board. She was dismasted and unmanageable; but her hull was sound—sound enough, as the event proved, to survive the battle for eleven years; for not until 1816 did this fine three-decker meet her end in Havana Bay, where she was wrecked. The British officers in the *Santa Ana* were less courteous, and, indeed, a good deal more bearish, than those who had boarded the *Trinidad*. The prisoners met in the *Santa Ana* an officer who had fought on board the *San Juan Nepomuceno*, and from him learnt in detail the story of what had befallen Gravina and the ships of the reserve squadrons, and of the heroic death of Churruga. Two days before the battle the latter had written to a friend: 'If you hear that my ship has been taken you will know that I have fallen.'

'Churruga,' said the officer, 'was deeply religious. At eleven o'clock on the morning of the 21st he had assembled his ship's company on deck, and had caused the chaplain to absolve all and to administer the Sacrament. Then, addressing the crew, he had said: "Children, in God's name I promise eternal blessedness to all those who to-day do their duty. Those who fail in it shall be instantly shot down; and if any such escape my eyes, or those of the gallant officers whom I have the honour to command, be sure that for the rest of their lives the stings of conscience shall render them wretched and miserable."

The *Nepomuceno* was surrounded by three British ships, but fought steadily until about 2 P.M., when three more British ships joined in the attack upon her. A cannon ball almost tore off Churruga's right leg at the hip. To those who went to his assistance he cried, 'It is nothing. Go on firing!' and he refused to quit the deck. But half his people were killed or wounded, and

the rest were dispirited by the fall of their captain. As he lay bleeding to death, Churruca ordered his flag to be nailed to the mast, and audibly thanked his men for the bravery which they had displayed. Then, like Nelson, praising God that he had done his duty, he breathed his last. He had been married but a few weeks, and he had quitted his young bride in the midst of the honeymoon, to serve his country. Not until he was dead did the *Nepomuceno* strike.

On the night of the 22nd, the Spaniards rose against the prize-crew of the *Santa Ana*, and retook the ship; and when, disturbed by the sound of firing, Gabriel went on deck on the morning of the 23rd, he found her, supported by a Frenchman and a Spaniard, in distant action with two British vessels. Admiral Alava, though wounded, was at his post, and in command; and as the escaping ships were presently reinforced by the *San Francisco de Asis*, the *Montañes*, and the *Rayo*, three vessels which had got away with Gravina on the 21st, the English craft, which were themselves barely seaworthy, were unable to again take the *Santa Ana*. By that time the weather had temporarily moderated, and the French frigate *Thémis* was able to take the helpless 112 in tow, while the *Asis*, the *Montañes*, and the *Rayo* went in search of other prizes that might be recaptured. But they were not successful; and, the wind again freshening, the two former ran into Cadiz without having liberated the *Nepomuceno*, the *San Ildefonso*, and the *Bahama*. As for the *Rayo*, she fell into British hands on the 24th, and, a little later, drove ashore and was lost.

The huge and crippled *Santa Ana*, towed only by a frigate, made slow progress; and some of the people from her were, in consequence, transferred to the *Rayo*, and were in her when she was wrecked. Gabriel was one of those who got safe to shore. He made his way back to Cadiz with a companion in misfortune. On the road the stranger held forth as follows:—

‘So far as the Navy is concerned, I have finished with it. The deuce take fighting. The King has a bad memory; and if, when you are fighting, you happen to lose an arm or a leg, you are forgotten altogether. The devil must be responsible for the way the King treats his seamen. Most of the captains who fought on the 21st had not received a penny of salary for many months. Last year there was a post-captain in Cadiz who, not knowing how otherwise to feed himself and his family, went into

service as waiter at an inn. There his friends found him trying to make the least of his misery ; and at last they managed to release him from his humiliating occupation. You could not find that sort of thing going on anywhere in the world except in Spain ; and yet people wonder when the English beat us ! I won't say anything about our guns and ammunition. The arsenals are empty ; and, although they proclaim it open-mouthed, not a penny-piece reaches them from Madrid. Of course, that is only natural, seeing that the King wastes all his money in paying people about the Court ; and the fellow who gets rid of more of it than anyone else is the Prince of the Peace, who ought to do pretty well with the 40,000 duros a year that are given him as Privy Councillor, Secretary of State, Captain-General, Colonel of the Guards, and I don't know what more. No ; as I have said already, no more of the King's service for me. I'm going to bundle off my wife and child, and take myself off home. I have served my time, and they must discharge me in a few days.'

'But you ought not to grumble,' remonstrated Gabriel. 'You were in the *Rayo*, and she hardly took part in the battle.'

'I was not in the *Rayo*,' said the stranger, 'but in the *Bahama*, and the *Bahama* is one of the ships that fought longest and best.'

'She is taken, though, and her captain has fallen !'

'That is true, and even now I can cry when I think of Don Dionysio Alcalá Galiano, the bravest skipper in the entire fleet. Certainly he was a hot-headed fellow, and never overlooked the slightest fault ; but, in spite of his strictness, we all worshipped him, for a captain who is feared on account of his strictness commands respect as well if he mingle justice with strictness. That is why his people really liked him. Besides, he was a generous and genuine man. If he wanted to do a friend a good turn he did not do it with the tips of his fingers. Why, once, at Havana, he gave ten thousand duros towards the cost of a single entertainment on board his ship.'

'I have also heard,' said Gabriel, 'that he was a wonderful seaman.'

'A seaman ? He knew more than the prophet Merlin and all the Doctors of the Church. He had made charts, and discovered places which lie as far off as hell, or thereabouts. . . . Alcalá Galiano knew that all was up when he saw the cursed signal to wear together and form line on the port tack. . . . Nelson, who, as everybody knows, was no fool, saw our long line, and said, " Ah, if

I break through that in two places, and put the part of it between the two places between two fires, I shall grab every stick of it." That is exactly what the confounded fellow did, and as our line was so long that the head couldn't help the tail, he worried us from end to end, while he drove his two wedges into our body. . . . The *Bahama* was one of the first ships to receive the English fire. About noon Galiano inspected his people, went through the batteries, and then made a little speech. Pointing to the flag, he said, "Boys, you may be sure that that flag is nailed to the peak." We knew who was commanding us, so that what he said didn't astonish us. He afterwards said to Alonzo Butron, a midshipman who had been put on guard over the colours, "Take good care of them. A Galiano never surrenders, and a Butron also ought never to surrender."

'It is a pity,' remarked Gabriel, 'that all these people had not an admiral who was worthy of them.'

'It was a pity,' assented the stranger. 'Now you shall hear what happened. The fight began, and, as you were in the *Trinidad*, I need not tell you that it was a good one. Three ships were firing into us, and we were engaged on both sides. From the very outset the wounded were as thick as flies. The skipper received a contusion of the leg, and soon afterwards a splinter hit him on the head, and wounded him pretty badly. But do you suppose that he cared? Not he! He stayed on the quarter-deck as naturally as if he were in his cabin, and didn't bother himself in the least about all the good friends who were worrying him right and left. He looked after the guns, and conned the ship as if we were at a review. When a round shot knocked his glass out of his hand, he laughed. I can see him still. The blood ran over his uniform and hands. He thought no more of it than he did of so much salt water. As he was worked up to a condition of fury, he shrieked when he gave his orders. If we hadn't obeyed him from duty, we should have obeyed him from anxiety for his safety. But that was soon all over, for a ball took off his head. The battle was not ended, but our enthusiasm was. When he had fallen, they hid his body, so that we shouldn't see it; but we all knew well enough what had happened, and after we had done a bit more fighting just for the honour of the flag, the *Bahama* struck to the English, who, I suppose, will take her to Gibraltar, if she doesn't sink, as I devoutly hope she may, on the passage.'

In due course the unfortunates reached Cadiz. 'I must add,' says Gabriel, 'for the credit of my compatriots, that never did any community treat the wounded with greater solicitude. The people recognised no difference between Spaniards and enemies, but took care of all under the broad banner of compassion. Collingwood's memoirs have done justice to these noble deeds of my countrymen. Perhaps the magnitude of the misfortune had stifled all rancour. Is it not regrettable that nothing reconciles men so quickly as catastrophe?'

And, indeed, the catastrophe had been a frightful one for Spain. She had sent fifteen ships into action on the 21st. Of these, but six remained to her after the battle and its consequences. The only consolation for the vanquished was the knowledge that shot, fire, and storm had deprived the British of most of their prizes; and that although nine ships had been lost to Spain, only three of these were gained by Great Britain.

The narrative of Don Pedro Galdós is particularly interesting because, as has been seen, it directs attention not merely to the incidents of the great battle, but also to the occurrences which immediately succeeded it. The importance of those occurrences was to a large extent lost sight of in England, owing to the immense enthusiasm awakened by the announcement of Nelson's crowning victory. That enthusiasm allowed little time for thought, and less for criticism; and while people congratulated each other upon the fact that the Franco-Spanish fleet had been practically annihilated, they forgot, and may almost be said to have never remembered since,—that of the nineteen vessels lost by the combined enemies of Great Britain, four were afterwards recaptured by their original owners, six were wrecked or foundered at sea in the bad weather following the action, four had to be destroyed, one was accidentally burnt, and only four ever anchored in British ports as material witnesses of the triumph. The loss of so many of the prizes was not, perhaps, in itself of great moment, for several of them were old—the *Rayo*, for example, had seen nearly fifty years of service—but, unhappily, the loss of the ships involved much loss of valuable life. 'As a practical proof,' says James, 'of the benefit that might have been derived to the fleet and prizes by attending to Lord Nelson's dying injunctions, the *Defence* accompanied by her prize, the *San Ildefonso*, anchored on the evening of the action, and weathered the gale in safety. The example of these ships was followed by two other of the

prizes, the *Swiftsure* and *Bahama*, and, with the assistance rendered by the *Donegal* and *Phœbe*, these also were saved.' That the obeying of Nelson's last order would have been beneficial has been very widely doubted ; yet, in view of the fact that three out of the four prizes which were saved did anchor, it is hard to resist the suspicion that if anchoring had been general, fewer ships and few lives would have perished.

W. LAIRD CLOWES.

## THE TRANSIT OF EARL LI.

HAVING conversed with the great Chinese Minister on his arrival in England, in the middle of his campaign, and on his departure from our shores, it is a pleasure to testify that, besides its public success, his visit left the best possible impressions on the mind of the old statesman.

Li Hung Chang, indeed, came prepared to like England, because, as he said himself, it was the country which contained the most people of his personal acquaintance. But he never anticipated deriving so much positive pleasure—a rare experience for any Chinese—from his sojourn among us. The sensations of a man who takes his first holiday after seventy are not easy to gauge, so much depends on temper and constitution; but the fortunate issue of the experiment in the case of Li Hung Chang was demonstrated by his high spirits and genial humour, which never flagged for an instant during his three weeks of toilsome enjoyment. That it is not always thus with His Excellency, any more than it is with other mortal men, we know very well; his *entourage* knows it better. It is hardly fair to pry too much into the domesticities; but the great have often to pay that sort of tribute to public curiosity. To his immediate attendants every man has to unmask, and it is certain that the personal staff of His Excellency were in a tremor of apprehension of rough passages with their chief. But day followed day without a ripple on the placid water, and the Viceroy was as gracious to his own household as he was to the outer world. Indeed, his exuberance of spirits, rising with each new experience, reached the climax on the last day of his sojourn. And it was contagious. Everybody about him was radiant. The genial Admiral, who had done so much to smooth the path of the Viceroy, beamed like the sun over the success of his work.

But to descend to particulars, the first thing that gratified Li Hung Chang was the comfort, the quiet, and the perfect freedom of his residence in Carlton House Terrace, so very different from the gorgeous but somewhat constrained hospitality officially extended to him on the Continent. The ideal situation of the

house itself was thoroughly appreciated, but it was really the sense of freedom which gave the key-note to the whole English tour.

Naturally, and properly, his Excellency was difficult to draw on the subject of his Continental experiences, but he let out this much, that though there was greater brilliancy, and perhaps greater distinction, about his reception in Germany, he relished the easier friendliness of England much more. This impression was deepened by his visit to Osborne. The Kaiser had subjected the Ambassador to the most rigid ceremonial, abating nothing of the full tale of bowings and retirings. The weather was hot, and the old man nearly fainted with fatigue on the stairs and in the corridors of the palace before he was finally released from the stern military escort which had charge of him. The Sovereign himself sat erect with his sword laid across his knees, and all was starch and kettledrum. The ex-Viceroy looks back on that day's experience with a kind of horror.

In striking contrast with this was the quiet grace of Her Majesty's reception of the Chinese Ambassador. His Excellency spoke in terms of warm appreciation of the consideration there shown him. Of course there are two sides to such a question, and as the German reception was carefully thought out by responsible ministers, it must not be assumed merely because our procedure was different that the German reception of Li Hung Chang was not, after all, the one dictated by the highest policy.

Of the mass of objects presented to the Chinese statesman, certain strong general impressions have been carried away by him, which will bear fruit if he lives. But of the separate and particular impressions there is a considerable proportion quite undigested, and he would have learned more if he had seen less, and that more leisurely. Much of what he was intended to see was missed. For instance, he was to be shown how applied science had triumphed over nature in making the Clyde navigable, in order that he might get suggestions for the taming of some of the unruly streams of China. But nature triumphed in another way, for the great sight-seer was deeply engaged with his dinner during the most interesting part of the transit.

Of the general impression, however, there is no doubt, for the Viceroy reiterated it many times. He was convinced by ocular demonstration of the solid qualities of the English people, of their capacity for great undertakings, and consequently of the value of their co-operation in the arts of peace. The wisdom of his choice

of Englishmen as the pioneers of railway building has thus been amply confirmed ; and the way has been paved for a more fruitful intimacy between the two countries in the future.

By what title should we describe our recent Chinese visitor ? Some accommodating herald created his eldest (adopted) son a 'lord' or 'viscount,' and promotion in the family progressed so rapidly during the English tour that he was raised to the dignity of 'count,' while a second (true) son was, by favour of the gentlemen of the Press, elevated to the rank of viscount on the day of their departure from the English shore. It is not very clear, indeed, which of the two is count and which viscount ; but it makes no difference, since neither of them is lord or viscount any more than the head of the Salvation Army is a British General. They are but Pickwickian peers. But if the young gentlemen elect to be known by these titles in the Western or Barbarian world, it seems somewhat hard that the fountain of these honours should be known only by his plain, undecorated name. There is nothing in China in any way corresponding to the courtesy titles which we give to the sons of peers, and therefore the English titles conferred by the Press on Li Kin Fang only represent the gratuitous adulation of his admirers. But there is a substantial Chinese equivalent for the European 'count,' English 'earl,' and Li Hung Chang is fully entitled to be addressed as Earl Li. That is to say, he was by the grace of the Emperor, as a reward for distinguished services in the suppression of the Taiping rebellion, elevated to the third rank of nobility, the three grades of which are quite naturally rendered by the European titles of duke, marquis, and earl. Therefore there is perfect propriety in speaking of Li Hung Chang as Earl Li, by which title, indeed, he would prefer to be designated. For 'Chung Tang,' or Grand Secretary, though a title of supreme value in China, having nothing corresponding to it in Europe, serves no purpose in the West beyond supplying doggerel rhymes. Li shares the rank of Grand Secretary with only four people of his own—*i.e.* Chinese—race. There are also four Manchu grandees who hold the title, this coupling of Manchu with Chinese in some of the great offices of state being a system adopted by the conquerors for cementing their imposed authority to the existing Chinese administration. No amount of either merit or favour will avail a candidate until a death vacancy occurs.

Rarity gives value to the Chinese titles of nobility also. Apart from the Imperial clan and the 'iron-helmeted' princes whose

families were ennobled at the conquest 250 years ago, the hereditary aristocracy may be counted on the fingers. In the case of the Manchus an automatic system keeps down the numbers by a descending scale of inheritance, the son assuming a rank a grade lower than the father, until the patrician strain merges in the plebeian. In the case of the Chinese, those who are ennobled transmit the rank in perpetuity to their eldest sons. But their numbers are few. In the first rank, indeed, there are but two patents of nobility, and one of these is beyond all question the oldest dukedom in the world. One is almost awe-struck in contemplating a family history stretching back in an unbroken line for upwards of 2,000 years. Yet such is the actual position of the family of the Duke Kung, the lineal descendant of the sage Kung-Fu-tsz' (Confucius). It is a compendium of the endurance of the Chinese race, of its antiquity and its vitality. The present Duke is known as a perfect gentleman, modest, but accessible under reasonable conditions, a man above politics and party, above dynasties and revolutions, the permanent factor of the national life embodied. There is no hiatus in his pedigree, no collateral junction, no inheritance by the female line, but a direct descent from eldest son to eldest son from a time anterior to Imperial Rome. De Quincey said that if he met a Chinaman he would take off his hat, for here, he would say, is a man 2,000 years old! How small seems our 'Came in with the Conqueror' beside this real antiquity; and how it marks off the reflective East from the 'thundering' West to observe that it is not the descendant of any Conqueror, but of a moral philosopher, who now stands out before the whole world as the premier hereditary man!

As if, however, to compensate the paucity of living nobility, the Chinese have an ordinance for ennobling ancestors for one, two, or three generations. The exercise of this faculty by the Emperor of China in favour of the family of Sir Robert Hart a few years ago caused as much tittering in this country as the yellow riding jacket and the peacock's feather used to do till the visit of Earl Li made these objects familiar, and discovered them to us as no more absurd than our European insignia. But when one considers how eager is the search after evidences of aristocratic distinction among our own ancestors, how fondly we prize descent from the great, and how rare it is to appreciate the value of ascent from the mean, we are constrained to admit that there is, after all, some sense in the Chinese arrangement. It meets a human want.

And the promotion of ancestors is free from some of the drawbacks which attend the elevation of the living. They, at least, are safe. They can neither squander our patrimony nor bring our name into disgrace. In connection with what is vaguely called 'ancestral worship,' the ennobling of ancestors has a significance which can hardly be appreciated by us.

Let us now consider for a moment what is implied in this journey of the Chinese statesman. We who stay at home at ease are accustomed to see, to welcome, and to criticise strangers, whom we expect to fall naturally into our ways, every departure therefrom supplying copy to the comic journals. The idea that there can be any other standard either of ethics or etiquette scarcely enters our minds. What is outside our conventions is barbarous, nor does it occur to us that it could be otherwise. But in China we have an old community, whose sequence of thought, whose canons of conduct, and whose social usages and maxims are all antithetical to ours; a community which was as civilised almost as it is now before Alexander of Macedon led his armies to India. To such a community it is, of course, we who are the 'outside' barbarians. If we but examine ourselves a little candidly, we cannot help seeing that this must be so; that we should feel exactly as they do with half the justification which the Chinese have.

Now we have had an old man bred up in that far-off world—much farther from us in thought than in distance—immersed in its business and absorbed by its life, never till last year having planted his foot outside its borders—we see this veteran suddenly plunged into another world, a rushing, tearing, flashing world, as strange to him as a new planet might be. Yet it does not move a muscle of his face, does not interrupt a single hour's sleep, nor disturb the tenor of a single repast. This specimen of a stolid Oriental carries himself through a succession of scenes of splendour and bustle as calmly as if he represented the suzerain of the kings and kaisers with whom he has been hobnobbing. With the wonderful knack of being civil to all he has managed to do the right thing in all societies by native instinct, and without awkwardness to maintain the same equal address to peer and peasant, as if society for him had no classes. No man, it may confidently be averred, has ever been required to pass through such a social ordeal before.

What the Chinese statesman really has learned, and had burned

into his bones, so to say, by his visit to Europe, and especially to England, is the enormous material resources which Western nations wield. What he saw at Spithead almost overawed him. When he returned to London he was like a man who had seen a vision. Speaking under his breath, he confessed to a friend that he never imagined anything like the display of naval power he witnessed there. 'Why,' he said, 'I saw sixty ironclads—sixty!—at anchor,' an exaggeration not unnatural to an amateur who was being hurriedly informed about successive novelties, and who easily classed all the ships reviewed as battleships. It was an object-lesson which he could thoroughly appreciate; for he knew well what had been the cost of the two ironclads which China had possessed, and he had seen how these two ships had practically kept the whole Japanese fleet at bay. Two more of them, well furnished and well officered, would have turned the tide of the late war. Assuredly nothing impressed his Excellency so intelligibly as the spectacle of a formidable British fleet.

And so with all our mechanical appliances; the telegraph cables; the railways carrying him so swiftly through their intricate mazes, a model of organisation; our shipbuilding yards; our arsenals and the whole scheme of material forces. These, and these alone, we may be sure, are the sights that have made their mark on the mind of our distinguished visitor. We know how deeply he was impressed with the magnificent display of military organisation which the Emperor of Germany allowed him to see. The perfection of the drill fairly astonished him. He could not believe such things possible, and when he remembered the heavy, slouching movements which even his own drilled troops, the best of them, exhibited, he had a standard by which to estimate the mathematical precision of the German soldier. The *crème de la crème* of the army was shown him, the 'school battalion,' where all the newest tactics, arms, and drill are introduced, and where the best discipline of the army is exhibited. Into this school battalion, which consists of 1,500 men, are drafted detachments from a succession of regiments, which are put through a course of severe instruction and are then returned to their several corps, there to become instructors in their turn.

By this efficacious means the leaven of the highest discipline and of innovations and improvements works incessantly in the whole German army, and the school battalion itself is probably the most perfect human machine in the world. Such perfection

is so far out of touch with the loose formation of the Chinese military system that it is perhaps more calculated to suggest despair than to stimulate to reform. The gaps to be filled are so vast, that long before China could raise an army approaching to the efficiency of any European force, the fate of the Empire will have been decided by circumstances beyond her control.

The British naval display was calculated to produce a similar impression ; and instead of China ' buying a fleet,' as some of our newspapers seem disposed to recommend, perhaps one of the most useful lessons which his sojourn in Europe has taught his Excellency Li is the uselessness of any such expensive toy. Not by her own strength can the huge empire of China be defended, nor by her own guidance can her policy be shaped so as to lead her through the intricate currents of international navigation.

What hopes the ex-Viceroy may seriously entertain of a renewed political career, it would be hard to say. All men think all men mortal but themselves, and as a life of learned leisure is hardly to be counted on as an enjoyment to a man who has been all his days immersed in unceasing toil, no doubt he, like others, would resent being put on the shelf. The clinging to power, to the chances of emolument, even the appetite for work, are common enough characteristics of the old. For convenience they sometimes plead age, while their whole demeanour is a protest against senility and a series of strategical defences against the encroachment of the last enemy. Viewed practically, and from outside his own orbit, the functions of the great Viceroy are henceforth more likely to assume the form of sage counsel than of vigorous execution. He may elaborate schemes of national progress and reform, which must be left to others to carry out. And if he returns to his sovereign with a great prestige, it would be better perhaps to preserve it as a vantage-ground for uttering wise advice than to risk his reputation by fresh efforts in the executive domain, which he might not have vital endurance to bring to any successful issue.

Among the scintillations from his inner chamber of imagery which were drawn from the Viceroy by the queries of his entertainers was his frank avowal of his belief in luck. He believes in the doctrine, which is not quite obsolete among ourselves, that to be lucky is better than to be clever. But had he done full justice to his own beliefs he might have claimed to be free from the slavish superstitions that enchain the energies of his countrymen

generally, for therein he stands as much alone as he does in his political position.

A comparatively recent episode in the Viceroy's life showed pretty clearly the attitude which he assumed to the magic and the sorcery which are so universally dominant among his countrymen.

Towards the end of 1891 Li Hung Chang was taken with influenza, which had by that time become well established in China. The epidemic did not originate in that country, as was sometimes alleged, but invaded it from the West by two different routes—by sea from the South and by land from the North. Its progress towards China was well marked stage by stage, and when it broke out in Northern China it was impossible to say which had won the race, the sea-borne or the land-borne infection, for they arrived simultaneously.

Li Hung Chang is a remarkably robust man, and the influenza attack was probably the only serious illness he ever had. But it was very severe, and brought him near to the verge of life, for he was already seventy. The course of the illness brought out some familiar Chinese characteristics which it may be not uninteresting at this time to recall, and it also illustrated in a rather luminous manner the real difficulty of joining the new cloth of Western civilisation on to the old garment of Chinese tradition.

The Chinese, as we have said, are known to be swathed in superstitions of the grossest kind, the accumulation of some thousands of years of uninterrupted legend. Their cast of mind is not so much unscientific as anti-scientific, inasmuch as they rarely seek natural explanations of the most ordinary phenomena, but supernatural. With all their stores of book-learning, they have not been able to throw off the most primitive form of fetishism. If an enterprise is to succeed the fortune-teller must be conciliated, a lucky day chosen to commence it, and proper ceremonial observed. The repute of the sorcerers varies greatly, as their fees do also, and certain temples are much resorted to for tokens of what will happen, even by the best educated and highly placed Chinese. It is universal. When a child is sick the parents do not ask what it has eaten, or whether it has been exposed to contagion, but what has bewitched it. Foreign missionaries often supply a ready answer to this query, much to their own inconvenience, and often to their damage and loss. So, although there are many clever doctors and even wonderful bone-setters among

the Chinese—though how they obtain their knowledge is a mystery—yet the whole art and practice of medicine is overlaid with charms and occult procedure.

It has been no unimportant part of Li Hung Chang's scheme of innovation to adopt for himself and his family foreign medicine, and to found a medical school under competent foreign teachers. For many years, and up to the day of her death, the Viceroy's wife, a most liberal, wise, and practical woman, had a lady doctor to attend her and her daughters, between whom a genuine attachment grew up. The Viceroy himself has been attended for many years by the gentleman who is with him now, Dr. Andrew Irwin; the most strenuous and extra-diplomatic efforts having been made by the French and Russian Ministers to prevent Dr. Irwin from accompanying Li Hung Chang to Europe. These active diplomats went so far as to warn the Viceroy that an English doctor would not be received either in France or Russia.

The serious illness of Li Hung Chang in 1891 was a severe test not only of his own faith in Western medicine, but of his power of resistance to the Chinese traditional practice, which pressed heavily on him. For only the Viceroy and his wife were converted, the rest of the family remaining devoted to the native folklore; and under the Viceregal roof were two veritable champions of reaction, his eldest true son and his son-in-law. The latter, as Imperial Commissioner, distinguished himself at the French attack on Foochow, in 1884, by combined bluster and cowardice. But he showed no cowardice in his attacks on the sick-bed of his father-in-law. The two reactionaries took it in turn to weary the old man with their expostulations against foreign medicine, and having won over his daughter, the wife of Chang-Pei Lun, she knelt at the sick-bed and implored her father to dismiss the foreign doctor. Then the oracle was consulted, and the response obtained, 'Change the treatment'; whereupon the efforts of the reactionaries were redoubled. Weak as he was, however, the patient held firm, being greatly supported by the pluck of a younger son, Li Ching Mai. This lad was at the time enjoying the advantage of a foreign education, and was consequently better able to appreciate the Western science of medicine than the rest of the family. He therefore charged himself with the duty of seeing the doctor's directions carried out. This was no easy task in a Chinese house, where the sick-room is managed much more in the fashion of the two immortals, Sairey

and Betsy, than according to our modern prescriptions. Neither physiological nor pathological processes being in the least degree reckoned with, the innumerable delicate attentions needed to sustain a flickering life are entirely absent. Instead of these there is an outcry for magic pills, spiritual incantations, and quack nostrums of every description, some of them monstrous.

All the while the patient is being talked to death by the family, who hold their councils at the bedside, where they discuss the issues of life and death aloud in the hearing of the helpless victim of their loquacity. In these noisy conclaves at the bedside of Li Hung Chang the leaders of the debate were in the habit of smoking their acrid tobacco, attendants standing by to fill and hand them the long pipe. This alone was death to a man who could scarcely get his breath. The doctor peremptorily forbade the smoking, and was effectively backed by young Ching Mai, who would not allow his elders to fumigate the sick chamber. In the matter of nourishment, too, which 'the family' would have restricted to rice-water, the young fellow was equally determined to see the doctor's prescriptions carried out, so far as he was able. Another point was temperature. It was midwinter, in a Canadian climate, and Chinese houses, even the best of them, are not airtight. The temperature of the room could only be kept up approximately to the normal by means of a stove. This was objected to as un-Chinese by 'the family,' but here, again, the young one fought for the doctor and had his way.

The refrain of these incessant family palavers was, 'He will die if he continues the foreign treatment,' and it is no wonder if the patient, who was really in a most critical state, got in part to believe it. Yet his resolution did not give way. On December 19—the date is important—he was visibly sinking, and a consultation was summoned, in which Dr. John Frazer, an experienced hand in China, and Assistant-Surgeon Grant, of H.M.S. *Firebrand*, assisted. The winter solstice was approaching, which the Chinese reckon as falling on December 22, a day of direful omen for a sick man. For a superstition akin to our own about the ebbing of the tide haunts the Chinese in respect to the winter solstice, which of all the days of the year is the most likely for an old man to die in. The family had earnestly impressed on Li Hung Chang that he would not survive that day. Even Lady Li, who also lay sick, appropriated the sinister influences to herself, and thought that she would not survive the

shortest day. When the doctors arrived, the Viceroy simply asked Dr. Frazer, whom he had known for many years, 'Shall I die on the 22nd?' The emphatic 'No-o-o!' from the cheery blue-eyed Ulsterman—albeit proceeding more from the heart than the head—brought a sparkle to the sick man's eye, and it seemed that from that moment recovery began; the patient took some nourishment, and strength returned quickly. Before many days were over the Viceroy was attending to public business, for a Chinese official knows no rest out of the grave.

So it was that Li weathered the winter solstice.

There is an episode in the career of Li Hung Chang which is never alluded to in the promiscuous interviews which his Excellency is in the habit of granting to ladies and gentlemen in search of copy. It is, in fact, as carefully avoided as the discussion of hemp ropes in certain families. The Taiping devastation swept over his province when he was still a young man, and he was made a captive by the rebels. There was a great absence of scholarship among the Taipings, and as they were constantly putting out imposing proclamations, they were hard put to it to provide a decent or even an intelligible literary form for these state papers. Young Li was a literary graduate of the first class. Instead of killing him, as they were wont to kill those who fell into their hands, the Taipings had the sense to employ their scholar-captive in writing out their placards and manifestoes, and to this happy adaptation of means to ends the world owes its Li Hung Chang. How he escaped from his captors is unknown to the present writer, but this is certain, that he has never forgotten those who befriended him at that time. Indeed, it is supposed his loyalty to the families of his benefactors has cost him much, for it has led to his keeping about him the unworthy sons of perhaps worthy fathers, unprofitable servants who brought neither credit to their patron nor advantage to the State.

The military career of Li Hung Chang extended over about nine years, during which time he brought his whole business capacity to bear on the extinction of the great and the minor rebellions. He was getting on in life and had no heir, and, taking the risks of campaigning into account, it seemed imperative that he should provide himself with a son who would care for the family tombs and maintain the family altar. According to Eastern custom—the custom of all nations in which the family system is dominant—he adopted a son, who was his own nephew. This

is the gentleman who is known as 'Lord' Li, who, in the natural course of events, will be 'Earl' Li, that being adopted as the English equivalent of the third order of Chinese nobility. In connection with this transaction the Fates played off a little bit of irony on the Li family, for, soon after the adoption, the natural heir appeared, and the true and the adopted son are both now travelling in the ex-Viceroy's suite. How much love is lost between the two is not accurately known; but the case is a little hard for the rightful heir, who opened his eyes on the world to find that his birthright had been forfeited before he was born. The true son has a slight defect in one of his legs, which makes him limp. Like Richard, he was sent into this breathing world scarce all made up, and the father used to crack his little jokes on the subject somewhat in the vein of Tristram.

AMICUS.

## LETTERS.

THE writing and receiving of letters comes near to the business and bosoms of most of us. It is natural, accordingly, that it should be a frequent subject of comment, oral and written, more especially when new volumes of correspondence have recently issued from the press.

In these last months we have had the letters of Dean Stanley, and of the eldest son of that 'well-recorded friend' whose Life was his first literary achievement. These two books belong to very different classes. The first consists chiefly of 'travelling letters,' dealing, for the most part, with places, and the second chiefly of 'familiar letters,' dealing, for the most part, with the daily life of their author or his family. The name of Dean Stanley is little more than an introduction to the first; for the letters will be read by the majority rather on account of the scenes which they delineate than on account of the personality of the writer; while the second will hardly be read at all, save by those who are interested in the poems or other works of the man who wrote them. Both, however, are excellent of their kind. It is emphatically true of letters that in them every sort of *genre* is admissible, save the *genre ennuyeux*.

A recent writer in the 'Edinburgh Review' found very little to interest him in Stanley's letters. I should say that some of them are about the very best I ever read. Who shall decide? To what canon can we appeal? It is simply a question of what the French call *appréciation personnelle*. I should traverse, in several particulars, the opinions expressed by the writer of the article to which I have just alluded; but, on what is perhaps the most important proposition which he advances, I am entirely with him. He is quite opposed to the common idea that the age of letters has passed—that people now only correspond in *telegraphese*, and do not take the trouble to write to their absent friends anything that can properly be called a letter. This may be true enough of people who live round the corner, and can meet each other whenever they please. If, however, you go a good many thousand miles away, the case is altered; and you may quite possibly discover that people—yes, and some of the

busiest people in this busy hive, which Robert Chambers so happily called the 'City of Exigency'—will write to you with the most exemplary regularity, always on the condition that you do not adopt the principles of the man who said of his friend: '— is such a d—d selfish fellow. He always expects you to answer his letters!'

I propose to illustrate my assertion that people still write letters by making a few extracts from those which I received while I was in India, choosing only, of course, passages which seem to me to be good from a literary point of view, considered by themselves, and absolutely irrespective of any interest which they might gain if they were published with the names of their authors.

In dealing with the letters of very intimate friends, it is obviously necessary to leave out a great deal that it was delightful to receive; and often the parts which must be left out are of such high literary merit that one leaves them out with a pang. Not unfrequently all one can venture to print is a mere snatch—a sentence, or a couple of sentences; still, if these are worth detaching, they are enough to make the letter which contains them a good letter.

I have confined my selections to the letters of four correspondents, mainly because they happen to be the most readily accessible to me in the place where I am writing. They will suffice, I conceive, if not to prove my thesis, at least to make its truth highly probable; but I have made a list of twenty-three others, from whose letters I could quote, if necessary, in support of my views, without drawing on the correspondence of those friends who dealt chiefly with politics. Out of the four, the one from whose letters I shall make the greatest number of extracts never printed a single line; and the same remark might, with substantial, but not verbal exactitude, be made about two of the others. The fourth was pretty widely known as an author.

The first extracts I shall make are from the correspondence of a man who, in advanced life, sat, for a single parliament, in the House of Commons, but was exceedingly little known beyond his own district, save to those who, from time to time, enjoyed his hospitality there.

The following shows him on his bibliophilic side:—

'You please me by asking of my books. I was unable to resist the Beckford Library—out of all sight the most uniformly

fine of any large collection I ever saw, alike in purity and perfectness of condition and in admirable beauty of the bindings. It would be worth your while to get sent you a copy of the priced catalogue—the ants would surely spare it for a day or two to let you read it. But no catalogue can give one an idea of the spotless beauty of *every* book in it. You know that he never allowed sunlight to touch them, or any artificial light, except from the top, and through a double glass roof like that in the house here. Thus the backs of the books are as fresh as their sides; and by opening them freely to air, instead of shutting them up under glass, there was no damp in any I examined. The rage at present is rather for great old bindings from distinguished libraries, with the cachet of their arms or particular styles, than for anything else, and thus the enormous and undue prices. A copy of the first edition of Buchanan's Psalms, the same as yours, brought 300*l.* odd. To be sure, it was an L.P., in perfect white beauty as when printed, and encased in such a binding! from the Grolier Library, spotless, delicate, perfect. I got many other things—an almost unique L.P. copy of Bishop Burnet's "Memoirs of the two first Dukes of Hamilton," in folio, with proofs of the portraits, and Beckford's autograph notes, and in fine old red morocco; also some lovely red moroccos and blue moroccos, by Derome and Padeloup, of Bayle's lesser works, and others about Spinoza, and the first editions, under false names, of Voltaire's sceptical *brochures*, and books of emblems. It was a speciality of Beckford that every book containing prints should have them proofs.'

A subsequent letter continued the subject:—

'I do not think I have said anything of the Beckford Sale, Part III. It deserved all said about the quality and price of the books in it. They were in perfect condition inside and outside; the bindings as fresh as when new; the editions, the plates always the choicest—every volume a bijou. The reputation of Deseuil was not advanced, however, on the comparison of his work with that of some other great craftsmen of the French school—Derome, Padeloup, Le Gascon; but it kept up the price of all books having his name, and I didn't get even one of them. I was content with certain productions of Derome, Padeloup, and Boyet of the eighteenth century; and I am going to send you, by the Indian parcel post, a sample of the great inimitable collection which you may care for. I add that, while these French binders

of the eighteenth century gave a solidity and a character of their own to their volumes, not easily described without handling them, it was in their gilding especially that their excellence is to be seen, and in the grace of the design of their tools on the back, sides, and insides of their books. Modern binders seem to execute all their designs and ornaments by machines, and so mechanically ; the men of the last and former centuries put them on by hand, by "petits fers," and so, while sometimes irregular, they have more spontaneous freedom and individual character given to each book. The one is a manufacture, the other was an art, as in the case of real Oriental fabrics and porcelain, before debased by working on a great scale for Europe ; and while on a favourite subject I add, too, that, subject to what I have said about the too great monotony and want of freedom in the ornaments, nothing otherwise in the bookbinding of the early part of the last century exceeded the loveliness and finish of modern bookbinders like Roger Payne and Kalthoeber in England down to 1810, and since, like Bedford, Clarke, Hayday, Charles Louis, Rivière, or like Trautz-Bauzonnet, Lortic, Duru, Capé, of the recent French school, so infinitely varied and charming in their handling of morocco.'

The next passage shows the writer in another, but very characteristic, mood :—

'Before I say one word about human matters, let me tell you how surely and truly you reckoned on my sympathies in your mention of poor "Guard." I carry back my first acquaintance with him pretty far—to our first visit to Eden, I hardly know how long ago—when he essayed to get into the drawing-room through the door that opened to the ground. My last sight of the "grand old" beast was in his decay at York House, but with his loving devotion to you unabated. Peace be with him !'

The two extracts which follow are the only divagations into politics which I shall permit myself; and I do so because, as they contain two diametrically opposite views of the same statesman, by the same correspondent, one of them will be acceptable to each party in the State :—

'Let me say of Gladstone what he well deserves. He is master of the situation ; he could with a word or two have opened the flood-gates of agitation and sent the stream full against the Peers. He did no such thing; and his whole speech and attitude, ever since the Lords did their work, have been in the highest

degree statesmanlike and conciliatory. It may be said that he could not have done otherwise. But a significant aside from him would have been caught up at once, as much as open speech ; and he has done everything that even he, with his unequalled influence over the people, their unrestricted, unmoved confidence in him (which I have always insisted on, in writing to you, as the chief guide in estimating our immediate future), that even he, with all his eloquence and sympathies and command of the nation, could and should have done, to keep the unavoidable agitation in a safe channel. One sees blemishes in him as a tactician, and very, very great mistakes in Eastern policy (that, of course, is only my opinion), but the power and the charm of the man are wonderful.

‘I never had a finer opportunity of watching him than at his Foreign Office speech last week. I was directly in front of him, and the expression of his face, of his marvellous eyes, of his whole countenance, the dignity, calmness of manner, the grace and command of every fitting phrase as it came spontaneously from him, was catching, irresistible. Truly there is but one Gladstone, and he has no prophet.’

‘He is working with fiery materials, and with some workmen not easy to keep firm in hand. But they all know—we all know—that the people are with *him* and with nobody else, and that conviction keeps us all straight. I am not sure that he is one who attaches any *clientèle* of personal friends from attachment to himself individually, as some men have done; but with the liberal people of the nation he is absolutely and more entirely their idol than in 1880.’

‘Nescia mens hominum fati !’ Not two years had gone by, when the Great Catastrophe had occurred : the Liberal party was shattered to atoms, and the same man wrote :—‘We have just escaped from the peril of shipwreck by default of our pilot, and can speak of nothing but our own deliverance !’

The next extracts are from the pen of a lady. The letter from which the first passage is taken was written at Monte Generoso :—

‘I wonder if you know this place ? You must, and yet I do not remember when you were here. We are in the midst of hills all fresh and green with early summer woods and meadows, which roll and toss themselves into every conceivable shape, as if to tell of the delight with which they hold the lovely blue lakes in their embrace. Beyond rise the more distant purple ranges, soft and calm,

and beautiful ; and the whole is clasped by that wonderful circle of snowy ramparts beginning to the south-east with the great walls of the Engadine, and ranging through the peaks of the Oberland round to the Matterhorn and Monte Rosa. The circle is only broken to the south, where the plain of Lombardy spreads itself out, with Milan in the mid-distance, while far away the snows of the Apennines mingle with the clouds. These last I have to take a little on trust, but all the rest is clear even to my vision, and on a morning like the present I think it is the most beautiful scene I have ever beheld. I am writing out-of-doors, and have only to lift my eyes to see a large portion of this wonderful panorama.'

The following extract is from a letter of the same summer :—

‘The scenery of the Engadine gave me much more pleasure this time than it had done on previous visits. When we first went up, we certainly missed the variety and richness of the Italian lake district. The Engadine is a little hard ; but it has a beauty of its own. The chain of little lakes that fill this valley are so dainty in their colour—a delicate, semi-opaque, bluish green that I have never seen elsewhere ; and they are so prettily set in sombre woods of Cembra pines and green mountain slopes surmounted by snowy peaks, which gleam with dazzling white against the full blue of the summer sky ! There is a sparkle, a crispness about it all that is pleasant and refreshing to the eye, and is in keeping with the exhilarating effect of the climate on health and spirits. Then I confess that the side valleys, with their foaming glacier torrents, exercise an effect upon my imagination—all leading up, as they do, to that vast silent region of snow, the 240 miles of ice-girt mountains and valleys which form the great Bernina range. The peeps into Italy, too, are very lovely ; the view down the Maloja Pass, and, still better, the view from the bridle-path on the Bernina Pass, whence you look straight down for three thousand feet into the beautiful little lake of Poschiavo, and see the road, below that, winding among the chestnut trees, till it loses itself in the rich warm purple shadows of the Valtelline. We had glorious weather, a hot summer sun, and brisk, sparkling air, and a cloudless sky, with now and then a thunder-storm and a fresh fall of snow to renew the beauty of the mountains.’

The next passage I shall quote was written in England :—

‘I was most grateful to you for recommending “Marius.”

Sophie read it to me at Chaumont, and we enjoyed it greatly. There are things in it which one would have thought it impossible to have found expressed in words—things too subtle almost for the intellect to grasp, but which are apprehended by all the more delicate susceptibilities of one's nature. The words, too, are entirely in harmony with what they seek to express—often scarcely more than shadows of thoughts. And what interests one above all is to find that this subtle development of mind, this beautifully delicate unfolding of character, ends where so many good and simple lives begin and end. The sufferings of the world bring them to the same point. The thought of these sufferings becomes unendurable without the belief in the love and compassion of an infinite being; the imagination not only accepts—it demands—the great compensation which is offered by Christianity.'

The following is from the same letter:—

'I love the tops of mountains, and while they are still fresh in the mind, one has but to close one's eyes to shut out the darkness of these English November days, to live again in light and space. Do you know, my ring with the beautiful opal and the pure sparkling diamonds set round it (you and —— will remember) is constantly recalling a most enchanting effect of light and colour that occurred at Chaumont on certain summer evenings, never to be forgotten. The pale metallic moonlight used to creep across the lake, and mingle above its waters with the rich glowing tints of the fading day, and, of this mingling, sprang into life a world of magic beauty—earth, air, and sky all taking upon them the most delicately brilliant hues—hues soft and tender, and yet full of lustre, like the flames that lie imprisoned in the opal.'

The letter from which I make the next extract came from Carinthia:—

'You ask for a description of Klagenfurth, for reasons I can well understand. I never saw a town of which it was more hopeless to attempt a description. It is utterly without character, composed of commonplace, white houses, ranged in streets and squares, one scarcely distinguishable from the other. Formerly it was surrounded by ramparts and a moat; but they have been levelled, and now there is absolutely nothing but your own sense of locality to tell you by which side of the town you are driving in. Yes, there is one feature, but that is not beautiful. There is the Neuplatz. At one end of it sits a very unimposing statue of

Maria Theresa, and in the middle there is an erection, which is the work of art of Klagenfurth—a feeble stone dragon looking at a feeble man, who stands at a respectful distance from the dragon, with arm uplifted to slay him. Neither of the figures looks as if it had power to vanquish anything, even one the other. The only evil that has befallen either in the course of time has befallen the dragon, for so many French soldiers sat on his tail in the beginning of the century that it broke off and had to be mended. The inner meaning of this work of art is the triumph of man over evil, otherwise the draining of the pestiferous swamp upon which the Dukes of Carinthia saw fit to build the town of Klagenfurth. Nothing can exceed the beauty of the country on all sides of this very undistinguished town. We are on the north side of the Wörthersee, and we look from our windows straight across to a most picturesque pilgrimage church—Maria Wörth—built upon a high promontory jutting out from the opposite side of the lake. Behind this is a range of hills, separating us from the valley of the Drave, which runs eastwards only a few miles to the south of us and Klagenfurth; and again to the south of the Drave, and, running parallel with it, rises the beautiful chain of the Karavanken Mountains. Its highest peak has this morning, for the first time, clad itself in snow, and is gleaming pure and bright against a sky of cloudless blue. To the north and east we have the Carinthian Alps with their multitudinous lakes and streams, large and small. A hundred and seventeen lakes have been counted in the province of Carinthia alone, and you can imagine the freshness of a land thus blessed with water. It is altogether a charming country—charming in its natural features, and charming in its people (I mean the higher classes), who are graceful and gracious, with manners at once easy and high-bred.'

The very few who knew personally the highly gifted man from whose letters I take the following extracts will have no difficulty in guessing the name of the writer.

I had sent him a copy of some remarkable documents from Malabar, and he replied:—

‘Many thanks for the copies of the astoundingly early Jewish and Syro-Christian deeds. They smell of a vast antiquity. On their first perusal they suggested a grotesque resemblance to a more recent muniment in my own possession, which will require a few explanatory lines. A certain —, who survived in knee-

breeches long enough to give me candy-sugar as a child, was Grand Trumpeter of all England, and, as such, had the right to license all the acrobats and mountebanks at country fairs. This may seem to you incredible, but I have a regular signed and printed official deed of license, dated circa 1820, from this excellent gentleman to a mountebank within named, permitting him to beat drums, blow horns, dance on ropes, and to commit other absurdities. I picked up this document in the catalogue of a dealer in old deeds and charters, because I remembered the Grand Trumpeter himself, and it is now a joy and a possession to me for ever.'

The next four passages are botanical:—

‘A day or two back writes Newbould to announce the demise of a certain botanist, who was a man of singular proclivities, and who, by his unaided efforts, nearly (some say quite) spoilt a volume of topographical botany. He lived, moreover, in a district of whose flora I had special charge, and no *Rubus* was half the thorn in my flesh that he was. His original and amiable leading idea was this. When he wanted to find a rare plant in any given spot, where it had as yet been fruitlessly searched for, he recorded it there boldly as found, and so saved himself much trouble, though he gave more to other people. Perhaps in the Elysian plains the wish to find a plant and its actual occurrence may prove synonymous. But, in the present imperfection of earthly affairs, he gave (while he was spared) Watson and myself a world of perplexity.’

‘The palms are out as they should be, this being Palm Sunday, and I may run down to the willow-beds near Thames Ditton next week, if I can get time, to see *Salix triandra* and *Salix rubra* in catkin, which I have not done for many years. These creatures, coming out absolutely by themselves, when there is nothing else to go for, are, by town dwellers, nearly always overlooked. There will be, however, the *Adoxa* out likewise, first almost of British plants. How poor this *menu* must sound to your Indian bill of fare—the true lotus and deep crimson *Nymphaea* !

‘All the ladies now are walking about London with bunches of daffodils in their hands, and often pin a second bunch under their chins. Artificial flowers are wholly at a discount, and that industry nearly, I believe, ruined.’

‘I went the day before yesterday for my first expedition into the New Forest, and blessed the memory of the wise and benefi-

cent Rufus, who, at the expense of those eternal crofters, whom it is the fashion of these degenerate days to be civil to, has saved a divine playing-ground for hunters of plants and insects. I was charmed with the primitive forest vegetation—a novelty to me, though by no means so, I expect, to my friend and present correspondent. It reminded me not a little of the forest of Belgrade, north of Constantinople, into which I took several riding picnics with the Stratfords.'

‘How odd it sounds here to hear you talking (like a rather despondent Bucks farmer does of his turnips) of a very fair crop of castor-oil. I am sorry the new bird of the Anamalais turned out only a young one, with undeveloped plumage. When I was making a list of —shire birds I had four or five similar disappointments, notably in the difficult family of the willow wrens. Your Madras St. George, Colonel Davies, certainly had a larger audience than his predecessor, when he slew the elephant who was “under the ban of the Empire.” Could not some Madras Pistrucci numismatically commemorate the deliverance of the district?’

‘Yesterday I went after *Trichonema* to Dawlish Warren, and I think your letter just come in was my spur to the expedition, for the place is so big and the season so late that I had said, “It is hopeless.” So I went on a forlorn hope, paced the sand-dunes for three hours, and saw nothing, but bethought me to knock, quite at a venture, at the first cottage I passed on regaining the mainland, and see if they could there give me *Trichonema*’s address. Well, it turned out trumps. The absolutely ignorant rustic generally has good physical observation, but the whole middle class loses its observing powers in Board schools, and we, in the upper, have to acquire the knack of using our eyes. It is a divine saying of Ollivier’s, with which your journal supplies me, “To see that which is before our eyes is almost to have genius.” Well, my rustic could not read, but he knew all about “the little crocus” and where it grew. He used, indeed, to send roots in years past to an enlightened Custom House official at Plymouth (to whose memory be peace), and, for the offer of a shilling, he was quite ready to come on the Warren and show me the spot, which he accordingly did.

'How exceedingly well Arnold has described the American vegetation in that charming extract of his letter given in your Diary. Of all our living poets he does flowers best, because most naturally.'

'I am glad to have seen poor Deutsch's epitaph. He was one of the most remarkable individualities I ever came across, and I got to know him pretty well somehow over his B.M. grievances, when the routine officialism of the place was a dead wall for that child-of genius to dash his head against.'

The epitaph to which allusion is made is certainly a very striking one, and may interest some of those who knew the subject of it:—

'Here is entombed the well-beloved,  
whose heart was burning with good things, and whose pen  
was the pen of a ready writer.'

MENAHEM, SON OF ABRAHAM DEUTSCH,

Whom the Lord preserve!

He was Born in Neisse on the 1st Mashiachwan 5590 A.M.,  
And departed from this world, in Alexandria, on Monday, the  
9th Iyar in the Year.

Arise, shine for thy light is come.  
May his soul be bound up in the bond of life!'

The next extract is in a lighter vein:—

'I congratulate you! The book-plate has arrived, and it is superb. Such an exuberance of botanical symbolism never appeared hitherto upon an ex-libris; you have achieved a record more enduring than bronze. It was an excellent idea to introduce the coin of Claudius struck over conquered Britain. The *Ocimum sanctum* supplies an appropriate centre to your architectural design. The *Phoenix sylvestris* right and left, jasmine-entwined, is most graceful. The rose of the Nilgiris, contrasted with the *Nelumbium* of the plains, is happily imagined. The book-plate will be prized by the collectors of posterity. I have handed one dark and one lighter impression to that Leviathan of ex-libris, —, who is very grateful, and begs me to say so. But he, I, and his *adlatus*, or second in command, all prefer the darker impression. As to the smaller book-plate for the 12mo. which is to be, all I can suggest is, first to make the inscription a little thicker and more prominent. Next to inscribe "Right Hon'ble" instead of "Right Hon."; further, to place a small shield above the sword and pen, with your armorial bearings. I think this is all. No, I should prefer a definite date, 1886, and tell your artist to sign his name

in very small letters in the corner, adding "Madras." Now I think I have done. I suspect other Anglo-Indian book-plates will now follow, and that you will be the parent of a glorious progeny.'

The last extracts which I shall give are taken from letters written by a lady of English birth, but who left this country when still very young, and resided, for the last thirty years of her life, exclusively in German-speaking lands—a fact which will explain her frequent use of German words and phrases:—

'I am so thankful that you like your life and your work. How soon one year will be behind, and Parliament must be a devilish place nowadays, so you are well out of it.'

'Altogether, what a ferment we live in! What with Russia and Germany always in act to spring, Ireland at boiling point, and the inevitable discussions about everything approaching in every country, with their agreeable consequences to individuals, life *is* pleasant!'

Later in the summer she wrote from the Thuringian Forest:—

'I am getting the little peasant-house here poetised. There is even a Morris wall-paper! The outside is all one mass of creepers, and the tiny garden of flowers.'

'One needs outside brightness as one begins to feel that that extraordinary thing, growing old, will happen to oneself. How astonishing and unpleasant and impertinent that seems! Really all very well for ordinary people, but *oneself*? ridiculous! Ay de mi!'

The next seven extracts are all from letters written at Weimar:—

'My life here is very quiet. The blessed theatre, with its constant succession of interesting pieces by modern authors, one's personal interest in some of the performers, one's kindly relations with various families in various ranks, the fact that women feel *Zutrauen* towards me, and come to me for sympathy, my sons, my friends, my correspondence, and my pretty little home—this with many books makes my life. Sometimes it is a little sad, a little lonely, often it is interesting, and now and then exquisite. An intense capacity for loving necessarily brings pain as well as pleasure.'

'I wonder was ever a family so fond of their humbler fellow-creatures as the —'s, *provided* they are birds or four-footed

beasts. There is a good deal of *Hochmuth* about it, which I entirely share. Dogs, now, never irritate one, are usually in good taste.'

'Thousands of flowers are gemming the grass on this 12th day of March. I have created a cheerful March for myself by packing all my grass full of *Leucoium vernum*, snowdrops, primroses imported from Lausanne, crocus, yellow, white, and purple, *Scilla sibirica*, and the March flowering pink *Erica*. It's a sight for sair e'en, and greatly contributes to a healthy tone of mind. Violets, too, in plenty. Indoors I have bright azaleas, and to-day has brought me a present—*Dendrobium thyrsiflorum*. It is but one long grappe of flowers. I imagine "there's plenty *Dendrobium thyrsiflorum* in the world."

'Last night I heard *Die neunte Symphonie*. It's splendid to hear Beethoven's music sung by the whole choir.

Ihr stürzt nieder Millionen ;  
Ahnest du den Schöpfer—Welt ?  
Such ihn über'n Sternenzelt ;  
Ueber Sternen muss er wohnen.

There is a *crescendo*, and an almost imperceptible pause between the *Schöpfer* and *Welt*. *Welt* is *heraus geschmettert*, and the effect is quite overwhelming.'

'The Grand Duke is now 65, as straight as a *Tanne*, and evidently as well as he seems. Long may he live! It will be a dull place, Weimar, when Karl Alexander's time is over. When one thinks of the place after it ceases to be a *Residenz* altogether, one pities those who dwell there; and who will live in the Villa — then, and gather the lilies I have planted, and the great clematis flowers ?

When I am gone what alien step shall tread  
This flowery garden close ?  
What alien hand shall pluck the violet sweet,  
Or gather the rich petals of the rose ?

Anyhow, I take great delight in my garden, and I make more of mine than Goethe did of his.<sup>1</sup>

'To-night I am going to the opera, which I am seldom well enough to do now; but it's Gluck's *Orpheus*, and the Princess's birthday opera, and oh ! such music.'

<sup>1</sup> The two gardens were close to each other on the same slope.

'Last night I saw old, old Liszt direct his own *Salve Polonia*.

'Little as I love his music, I did admit that this composition is a poem. One does hear and see a spectral nation frantically resisting annihilation, in one's mind's eye, whilst the music is going on.

'And the old man, the ghost of himself, feebly directing with the right hand that once had such cunning; the long black hair of the past now snow-white, and the ungovernable mouth now feebly smiling.'

• • • • •  
 'The "Faust" week has come and gone. This time I spent my small capital of strength on it freely. Who can tell how long Devrient Mephisto will exist, or how long one can assist at these two *Tagewerke*? *Der eigentliche Kern* of Faust's history,

Wer immer strebend sich bemüht,  
Den können wir erlösen,

is in the second *Tagewerk*, and that is the *Hauptsache*.

'Those who have never assisted at these "Faust" evenings are far from being able to conceive what an event in life they are; and the oftener one has passed through them, the grander the impression from year to year. I think I must have been fifteen times now through "Faust."

'*Wohlverstanden!* The second part is the greater, and Otto Devrient, whose *Bearbeitung* has made the performance possible, is himself Mephisto—Mephisto incarnate—the incarnation of the mischievous man of the world, *sans* ideals, as Faust becomes the man of the world with ideals.

'The second evening of "Faust" is one of the greatest of all intellectual gymnastics, and of poetical bewitchments surely the greatest in the world.

'Touguenoff's last book, "Senilia," was horribly *triste*. Those Russians have a monopoly of mournfulness, I think. Somehow, I don't find very striking things of late in print—I wish I did. One has read too many striking things in one's day. Even Gustave Droz is becoming dull. He has just disguised himself as an old woman, and written "Tristesses et Sourires." Really, I won't become such an old lady.

'Just got your note for my birthday. Thank you. Yes!  
 "Past middle-life"—that's it, very prettily expressed.

‘Goethe meant us to suppose Faust to be one hundred years old when he sinks into the grave, and the *Engelschaaren* sing :—

Wer immer strebend sich bemüht,  
Den können wir erlösen.

‘I think you must be *strebend dich bemühend*, more than Faust ever did, out there among your thirty millions.’

When she wrote the following the writer was again in the Thuringian Forest :—

‘From every window we see the hills and the forest and the green meadows. Morning and evening the cows go by to the upland pastures, with the cowherds and dear friendly dogs. We feed the dogs at our gate under the weeping ashes. The cowbells tinkle and clang *derweilen*; we close the gate when the bulls march by.’

The letters from which the three following passages are taken were all written at Weimar :—

‘Driving across the Park and the little Residenz last night, on an evening as still and warm and clear nearly as it would have been at Pau (after a stormy day on the same day of the year), a peculiarly vivid remembrance of the last ten years of my life arose in my mind, as I looked out on the lights of the Schloss of Weimar, dancing on the surface of the Ilm, and on so many objects that reminded me either of my own or of Goethe’s life, which has become as my own—on the Schloss gates, through which he must have passed such hundreds of times, and through which I have driven with you, and so often, to see Princess Elizabeth . . . on the bronze fountain, let into an old wall, which Goethe chose from a subject in the old church of San Ildefonso in Madrid, I think—two beautiful youths who died young, and are represented in the most touching manner. One brother has passed his arm round the other’s neck, who holds a torch reversed. Both are looking sadly down at the torch.

‘Beneath their feet the clear water has been bubbling forth since the day when Goethe’s eyes rested lovingly on the finished work, and on the lovely youths, once their mother’s sole delight, as — is mine.

‘Past Carl August’s equestrian statue, with which he himself would not have been wholly satisfied. Still it is Carl August,

and he stands before the Fürsten-Haus, the building into which the Court had crammed itself, and in which it was first known to Goethe, shortly after the great fire which destroyed the old Schloss. In at that door walked the Frau von Stein and Goethe, on that eventful night when they first met.

‘A few turns of the wheel more and her rooms come in sight, which looked over the orange-trees, which stand there yet in summer-time, and there is the low door through which Goethe passed quickly—quickly as we go to the best beloved, thousands of times, glad or sad.

‘Another minute, and we are driving by the wall of his garden—the garden of his town-house, the garden of so many experiments and so many pleasant hours of all sorts, upon which his eyes rested when he was at work in the little room which contained such great work.

‘Now past a dear friend’s door, where I am ever *strahlend* welcome, and past the beautiful Allée, down which one starts in summer weather for so many delightful days spent in exploring the sweet Thuringian country, and past other friendly doors. And here is the arch and the steps, flanked by wild roses, down which Wagner’s *first* and most perfect Elsa, and the most ideal Elizabeth of all Germany, stepped in her white robes and sunny hair, the wonderful eyes, not gold and not brown, but both, looking out upon the love-life she had till then only created in song.

‘Her husband you have seen and admired in elderly life. That June day he must have been beautiful to behold, as he stood beside her under the archway of stone and roses. And hand-in-hand they passed out to a life of single-minded, high-souled, and nobly gifted devotion to the Art of Song—good, beautiful, and wise beyond most human beings, as Pater would feel about them if I told him.

‘And yet a little further, and the little house comes in sight, which nevertheless contains such spacious rooms, and in them dwells so large, bright, and clear an intellect, and such dramatic genius, and such an indomitable will and industry. There lives my little friend —— ; behind those windows, and with fast-closed doors, those wondrous revelations of great characters get themselves evolved, and by dint of work so hard that one only gradually gets to comprehend how immensely hard it is.

‘And now we are passing round the theatre of Weimar. Here

is the low actors' door, through which these, my friends, have been going and coming for nearly forty years past ; and here are Goethe and Schiller, ever new, ever beautiful, ever comforting. And I always find myself feeling that the spot on which their worthy images stand is the central point of our earth.'

To-morrow, the 26th November, Schiller's "Räuber" will be given in the theatre—the hundredth anniversary of its first performance in Weimar. Goethe did not like it at all. In fact, it was so distasteful to him that the very fact of Schiller's having written "Die Räuber" kept him and Schiller apart for a long time. The great man was not free from prejudice, and Schiller laboured under a prejudice against Goethe till within ten years of his own death, when it graciously pleased Providence to induce the pair of wonders to take a walk together, and they lived happy ever after.

According to old custom the *Jenenser Studenten* will come over in great force and sing.'

A later letter describes the scene when they did come.

A long train of sledges from Jenia dash up, bringing the *Jenenser Burschenschaften* over to Schiller's "Räuber," just as on that day one hundred years ago. As the piece was about to begin the ringleader of the *Burschenschaften* jumped up, as they all sat round him in the parterre, commanding "Silentium!" and the splendid young voices burst out—

Stosst an !  
Jena soll leben !

each verse ending with

Frei ist der Bursch !

Immediately after they and all who could sing burst out into—

Deutschland, Deutschland über alles—  
Ueber alles in der Welt !

The Primus ending with—

Silentium,  
Das Spiel kann beginnen !

When the robbers sang their famous

Ein freies Leben führen wir,  
Ein Leben voller Wonhe,

the *Studenten* answered with the

Gaudeamus igitur !

ending with—

Silentium,  
Das Spiel kann weiter gehn !

'All these interruptions are the ancient privileges of the *Jenenser Burschenschaften* during the performance of Schiller's "Räuber."

'Exactly the same scene took place one hundred years ago, when the piece was performed before Carl August, and Schiller was presented to him.'

When she wrote the next two passages, my correspondent was at her forest home :—

'To drive through our glorious woods and glens just now—in the most delicious heat on the 14th September—the *Fichten* and *Föhren* and *Tannen* giving forth their health-giving odours, the coolest dells warmed and dried by many weeks of warmth, the brooks tinkling instead of rushing along—to enjoy open air all day long, to have every window all over the house constantly open, to forget that the sky can be otherwise than deep blue, to see the brilliant sunlight, the calmest, purest moonlight, all that about one—it is difficult to feel sure that *der kalte Boreas* must blow for many months over all this, ere I can hope to see you and the Thüringer Wald again.'

• • • • •  
'The sun is setting, as I write, over our dear valley. The music of the returning cowbells is dying away. There is no sound throughout the house which has been so full of young and cheerful voices for so many weeks. One can never know whether one will ever again see the Thüringer Wald, gather young creatures round one in its loveliness, be happy with them. . . . Well—

Ihr glücklichen Augen was auch Ihr gesehen,  
Es sei wie es wolle ! es war doch so schön.

and so Thüringer Wald and you—Good-night !'

The last letter I shall quote was from Weimar :—

'Mrs. Boyle<sup>1</sup> and I both appreciate the clematis. All she says of the vine and its *vornehmes Wesen* is very true; she is a fortunate woman to live in a climate which permits her to cover her house with the true vine.'

'Yet at this season—late September, early October—I am glad that our climate settles the question for us, and gives us permission only to embower ourselves in Virginia creeper, in the

<sup>1</sup> The allusion is to the Hon. Mrs. Boyle, known to many as E.V.B., and herself a most admirable letter-writer.

hardy sweet-smelling vine which bears no grapes, but takes lovely colours in autumn, and is infinitely graceful all the summer through, and the clematis and climbing roses, for every window is now framed in scarlet leaves ; the whole house flames in its garment of scarlet leaves and tendrils, and great blue and great white clematis flowers look out of this splendour. Later on, when *this* is over, the soft pale-yellow vine leaves will prolong the autumn colouring on the walls.'

Some of my readers will know, but some, I dare say, will not know, the excellent selection published in 1885 by Mr. Scoones, under the title of 'Four Centuries of English Letters.' During its compilation the author and his wife examined, as he tells us, nearly five hundred volumes, and made their choice from the letters of one hundred and fifty writers, nearly all of them persons of great eminence. Well, the test to which I should wish to submit is this. Let anyone take that volume, select from it the very best passages he or she can find, and then say whether they are much superior, or superior at all, to the extracts which I have picked out from letters received by myself within the short space of five years, and which I could largely multiply, as I have said, without diminishing the quality, or going beyond that very limited period in the ninth decade of the nineteenth century. Hundreds of people, if they will only carefully observe the letters which they receive from their friends at a distance, not from those in the next street, will, I am sure, come to the conclusion that they have hitherto underrated the epistolary merits of some of their correspondents, and will thank me for having suggested to them a new pleasure.

I am sometimes inclined to think that the common opinion, that letters are not so good as they used to be in former generations, is the result rather of the carelessness of the readers than of the writers. The hurry of modern life is so great that we are apt to read, answer, *if* we answer, and tear up, forgetting that a time will come when our correspondents may have vanished, leaving all recollection of what they wrote to our often treacherous memories. As we get on in life, the truth of Pater's remark is only too apt to force itself upon us :

' Not to discriminate every moment some passionate attitude in those about us, and, in the brilliance of their gifts some tragic dividing of forces on their ways, is, on this short day of frost and sun, to sleep before evening.'

One letter or one conversation makes us forget its predecessor, till nothing is left but a vague recollection that this or that friend, who is no more with us, wrote or talked brilliantly. The more's the pity; for a great deal thus is lost that would be delightful to ourselves, and every now and then something that would be interesting to many other people.

M. E. GRANT DUFF.

*MEMOIRS OF A SOUDANESE SOLDIER<sup>1</sup>*  
*(ALI EFFENDI GIFOON).*

DICTATED IN ARABIC TO AND TRANSLATED BY  
 CAPTAIN PERCY MACHELL,  
 LATE COMMANDANT 12TH SOUDANESE.

WHEN Gordon Pasha was appointed Governor-General of the Soudan in 1877, he had an utterly impossible task before him. The officers and officials he found had, almost without exception, been sent away from Egypt as a punishment, and their one idea was to grow rich as rapidly as possible, in order that they might escape from a country which they loathed. Alone, or nearly so, he wished to remodel the Soudan. On every side he encountered difficulties and impossibilities which would have disheartened any other man, but he always went on his way, rooting out as much evil as he could, and had he not been withdrawn two years later there is no doubt that the great Mahdi rebellion would never have taken place. While Gordon was there, he, to a certain extent, prevented the mudirs and officials generally from grossly misusing the authority entrusted to them, and also acted as a powerful check upon the slave trade. As soon as he was gone, the officials sank back into their old ways, and the Baggara Arabs resumed their traffic in Blacks. But the people of the Soudan had now seen the tarboosh-clad officials, who before Gordon arrived had exercised despotic sway, punished and deposed for acts which previously had been taken as a matter of course; so when Raouf Pasha became Governor-General, he was confronted with a condition of things with which he, at any rate, was quite unfit to cope. Raouf Pasha was anxious to economise, and disbanded many regiments of Soudanese who had been soldiers for years and knew no other trade. These men only needed a master, and they were not required to wander without employment long. With the prestige of the Government officials greatly impaired, with the Baggaras incensed at their trade in slavery having been temporarily checked,

<sup>1</sup> Copyright in the United States of America. Continued from the September number of the *Cornhill*.

and thousands of discharged Soudanese wandering about in need of work, the opportunity for a crisis was at hand, and soon we heard in Amedeb and Kassala that the long-looked-for Mahdi, who would drive the tax-gatherers into the sea, who would destroy the breed of renegade Christians who fattened at the believer's expense, and who would restore the Faith to its original purity, had arisen in the person of Mahomed Ahmed Ibn Sayid Abdallah on the island of Abba, in the White Nile.

Strange rumours reached us at first of this Mahdi. We heard that he was a native of Dongola, who had from his childhood been gifted with extraordinary powers of eloquence, and had long been widely respected as a teacher of the Faith. The burden of his address was that all this oppression, all this life of sorrow, was sent by God as a punishment for the people's sins. He, the 'guided one,' would guide them in the true path, and with the regeneration of their belief all their misery would disappear for ever.

The marvellous powers the Mahdi possessed as a preacher drew to his side every fiki who heard him, and with the fikis came their followers, until, wherever his word had reached, all were knit together, inspired by the one belief that Mahomed Ahmed was the Mahdi, the messenger of God, who would relieve them from their oppression.

The first attempts of the Government to seize the Mahdi and bring him to Khartoum were completely unsuccessful, and, though he was compelled to place himself outside the reach of the troops until he had a sufficiently strong following to enable him to hold his own, he made the best use of his time by drawing to himself the powerful Baggara tribe, who knew their own strength and only wished to avenge the losses which had been inflicted upon them by Gordon.

Early in 1882, Raouf Pasha, who was a man of no strength of character, was recalled, and Geigler Pasha acted as Governor-General. Then came Abd el Kader Pasha, who made energetic endeavours to atone for the faults of Raouf, but it was too late.

Not long after the news of the Mahdi's rising reached us, the effect was visible in the Kassala district, and the Arabs, who had always been made to produce their taxes with difficulty, now openly announced that they had been forbidden by the Mahdi to pay taxes at all. Takiteh was a small village near Amedeb, and its sheikh had been sent in a prisoner to Kassala on account of this;

suddenly the people of Takiteh made an attack upon us, and on our going out to fight them, we found them assisted by a number of Jaleen who had firearms. After a severe struggle we succeeded in beating them, and followed them up as far as Kofeet.

From this moment we were deserted by the Arabs altogether. No one would supply us with anything of any kind, and our commissariat fell low. Accordingly arrangements were made for systematic supply of the garrison by raiding. I was detailed to make the first expedition with my company, the captain being at Kassala; so, guided by one Tootoo Wad Halfai, an Arab I knew well, I made for a hill known as Gebel el Merfayeen, where I heard a large quantity of supplies was stored. I took out 100 camels with me, and brought them all back loaded up. Each company was now detailed in turn, and in this way we managed to feed our men. We used to hear that the Mahdi, who went by the name of Abu Seif Khashab, had forbidden any more taxes to be paid, that he was having all soldiers killed, and that bullets were useless against him and his followers. We heard of the defeats in Kordofan and Darfour, and now news reached us that Gordon had been sent for and was once more at Khartoum.

Osman Digna, who some two years before had left Suakin on account of the damage done to his slave-trading operations, and had gone to Khartoum, had become a devoted adherent of the Mahdi, and now came down to the Eastern Soudan with a letter from Mahomed Ahmed appointing him his emir over all that district. He made his headquarters at Erkowit, and devoted his attention to the country in the neighbourhood of Suakin. Sinkat and Tokar were besieged, and convoys from Suakin cut off. Every expedition which was sent out from that place met the same fate, and the inhabitants were expecting to be attacked every day, when Baker Pasha's force came down. Having restored confidence in Suakin, Baker Pasha took his force to Trinkitat, and started to relieve Tokar. But the Arabs fell upon them before they reached El Teb, and, a panic having set in, two-thirds of the Egyptian troops were killed, and only a scattered remnant succeeded in reaching Trinkitat. Immense quantities of guns, rifles, and ammunition fell into the hands of the Arabs, and it seemed that the Mahdi's followers were indeed invincible. Osman Digna deputed Mustafa Hadel to besiege Kassala, and the mudir having ordered two companies from Senheit and four from Amedeb as reinforcements, I went there just as the siege began, towards the

end of November, 1883. The Arabs shot into the town every night, and kept up a desultory fire by day, which was very harassing, so one day the mudir ordered eight companies of the Kassala, Amedeb, and Senheit battalions, with Halengas, bashi-bazouks, Shaggieh, and others, to go to a place called Gumam, where they were reported to be. When we drew near the position which they were supposed to be occupying, our bimbashi, Rashid Effendi, ordered a square to be formed, and then caused the artillery detachment to fire into the trees in order to ascertain whether they were there or not. This having failed to produce the desired effect, the cavalry detachment was sent on to see what it could do. Suddenly they appeared out of the bushes flying for their lives, and hundreds of Arabs at their heels. The cavalry broke our formation, and, before we could recover from our confusion, the Arabs, crying, 'Ya Sheikh Abd el Kader,' were amongst us. The artillery detachment were killed to a man, also some hundreds of the Kassala and Senheit battalions. Eventually we got our men together and retired in a sort of square, reaching Kassala in a shattered condition.

After this reverse it became impossible for our raiding parties to go out as before, and our supplies from without ceased. Several of our men deserted, and the outlook was not encouraging. A considerable supply of food fortunately existed in the Government store, thanks to the fidelity of the Shukhriyeh of Sheikh Abu Sinn, who remained faithful to the Government to the last.

Now we saw the Arabs beginning to wear the distinctive dress which we all know so well, and we began to speak of them as the fokara, or deraweesh (dervishes).

A party of them having settled in Khor Saddéna, we went out, some 400 infantry with cavalry and bashi-bazouks, to try to drive them off. But we found them in great force, and they routed us, pursuing us as far as Khatmieh, when reinforcements came out from Kassala to our rescue. Then we rallied, and in turn pursued the dervishes past their own camp, which we looted. One of our corporals picked up a big bag full of dollars, and was making off with it, when Murtada Effendi, a mulazim (lieutenant), tried to take it from him. The onbashi wished to divide the money between them, but the officer said he must have it all, and as the onbashi still refused, he shot him. Then the brother of the onbashi came up, and killed the officer. Mulazim Awal Abdullah Eff. Filfil was carrying off a fine prayer carpet, when

an Arab sprang up and drove his spear into his back. I remember seeing him come running into the company with the spear stuck fast, and we had to pull it out by force.

One day we were out cutting grass and wood—four companies of us, under Abd el Kader Eff. Hadaib; while we were at work we were attacked, and many of our people were killed before reinforcements came out and drove the dervishes off.

The dervishes next collected in great force at Abrat, and we marched out with all our available force to fight them. As we went along Sayid Mahomed Osman and Sayid Bakri el Morghani came after us and begged the mudir not to go further; but the mudir said it was necessary that we should drive the enemy away, so we went on. It was now summer, and the heat was very great, but we pushed on until we observed great clouds of dust in the direction of Gebel el Kuroon. The cavalry went on to see what this was, but found nothing, so we pushed on towards Golosi, which we reached in the afternoon. The dervishes were evidently waiting for us, for they came out to attack us at once, and, weary and exhausted as we were, we could not stand against their onslaught. We were soon broken, and retired fighting as well as we could, but losing men and officers as we went. Night fell, and this enabled us to escape annihilation. The party I was with turned off in the direction of Odeh, thence *via* Sebderat, and so into Kassala before dawn. Our losses were very heavy that day, six officers and 100 men of the Amedeb battalion alone having been killed. The mudir was very angry with Farag Bey Gazazi, and said that wherever this officer went he was beaten. Next day we went out and collected our dead as well as we could; all their arms and ammunition had been taken from them. At this time I was ordered to go back with a detachment to Amedeb, the captain remaining with the detachment at Kassala. I went with Sheikh Ahmed Hegag, of the Gadein, and Sheikh Mahomed Osman Morghani also left Kassala and came to Amedeb, where he did much good to the garrison by addressing them and urging them to hold out, as assistance would soon be coming.

Fiki Easa was the dervish emir specially entrusted with the siege of Amedeb, and Sagh Abdullah Eff. Salem, of my own battalion, was in command of the garrison. We were now in very great straits, and most of our donkeys had been eaten. We began to eat gum and hides, and the Morghani said that if things became much worse we should be compelled to try to escape into

Abyssinia. We managed to collect a few supplies by means of raiding parties, which, however, only worked at night, and only obtained small quantities at a time.

Communication with Kassala was no longer possible, and the Morghani decided upon leaving for Senheit. I also went there with fifty horsemen and a few bashi-bazouks to try to obtain some biscuit. By travelling only at night and hiding in the day, I managed to effect my object successfully. All this time the dervishes were evidently gaining in strength. They brought down large banners, and all of them were now correctly dressed in the Mahdi's uniform. Osman Digna was in supreme command, but Mustafa Hadel attended to Kassala, Geera, Galabat, and Gedarif, while Fiki Easa was in charge of the Sebderat, Gadein, Beni Amer, Amedeb, Senheit, and Massowah districts. Fiki Easa made a determined attempt to subdue the Gadein, but was defeated and he himself killed by Ahmed Hegag. There were enormous losses on both sides, and the Gadein lost great numbers of their horses. When Mustapha Hadel heard the news he gathered as large a force as he could muster, and marched to Khor Fathai, which lay between the country of the Gadein and the Beni Amer. Sheikh el Bekhit, of the latter tribe, united with Ahmed Hegag, of the Gadein, and together they attacked Mustapha Hadel at Khor Fathai. In the struggle which followed the dervishes were completely victorious, Sheikh Bekhit himself and Ali Wad Shekelai, of the Halengas, being killed, together with nearly all their men. Ahmed Hegag was among the few survivors.

The news of this fight reached us in due course at Amedeb, and a party of us was ordered to Bicha, where we remained a short time, until the mudir, who had gone out with a force towards Sebderat, was attacked during the night by Mustapha Hadel, and forced to retire to Kassala. Then he summoned all the troops he could collect to gather there, and Rashid Pasha, with many of the principal sheikhs, also joined him. But orders were now received for Rashid Pasha to return to Egypt, and on his departure detachments were sent back to Amedeb and the other out-stations. I went back to Amedeb myself for a few weeks, and then returned to Kassala once more with my company.

Soon after my return, Yousbashi Diab Agha, of the Kassala battalion, went out upon a foraging party, and his company was completely routed. I think they took nearly four days to re-unite

in Kassala. In a sortie we made after this towards Khor Fathai we were more successful, and narrowly missed securing Mustapha Hadel himself.

Strong reinforcements began to arrive for the enemy, who moved their encampment quite close to us at Hellet Ahmed Shereef, so that we were now completely besieged. One night we started out, four companies of the Amedeb and four companies of the Kassala battalion, and at dawn we fell upon their camp. They were in great numbers, and, as soon as they had recovered from their surprise, attacked us from all directions, so that we lost a great many killed and wounded, and had great difficulty in getting back at all.

After this the dervishes came and camped by the big Gemaizah tree of Bash Katib el Awad on the west bank of the Gash, and an attempt we made to drive them from their new position was equally disastrous. Our men were by this time completely disheartened, and convinced that they could never hold their own against the dervishes. Our fire was very bad, and the enemy, who said that our bullets only came 'from the head upwards,' used to run in upon us under the smoke.

We heard about this time that the garrisons of Senheit and of Amedeb had been withdrawn to Massowah, but we still held out, for withdrawal was impossible. One evening an Arab came in and told our bey to be very careful that night, as the dervishes intended to make a desperate attack upon the town and to capture it. Accordingly, every precaution was taken to guard against surprise. The men all lay down on the walls, the women were fallen in as reserve, and the Greeks and other civilians all mustered in readiness.

Suddenly, during the second watch of the night, the dervishes made a rush upon Bab el Farag, which opened upon the Khatmieh, working with axes and endeavouring to climb over with ladders and native bedsteads, but we just managed to keep them out. At dawn they succeeded in breaking a hole in the door, but Abdallah el Abd, who was then a bash shaweesh and is now a soldier in No. 6 Company of our battalion, formed his men up across it, and fired so effectually that no one got through. We found the ditches were piled high with dead and dying, and as soon as the enemy withdrew we went out and dragged the corpses away, our women disposing of any dervishes who showed signs of life.

Always closing in upon us, the enemy next made an encamp-

ment at Um Kuram, and though we made a half-hearted attempt to dislodge them from there, it was quite useless, as our men had lost all confidence, and would no longer face the dervishes in the open. My own horse was killed in this last fight, and I came back riding behind another officer on a mule. Mabrook Kreyk, who came in to us from the trenches at Suakin, and who is now in No. 4 Company, went off about this time and joined the enemy. They made him an emir and gave him a flag of his own, after which he used to come down to the house of Elias Bey at night and fire at us. He and his men used to call out to us by name, and ridicule us for holding out; so one night Mahomed Eff. Abd el Kheir, who was then a bash shaweeesh of artillery, and is now an officer in our own battalion here, obtained permission to take thirty men out and kill Kreyk and the other deserters before they induced other men to join them. He stole out over the wall before the hour when they usually began to open fire and shout to us, and, finding them asleep, killed all except Kreyk himself, who succeeded in escaping.

We were now in terrible straits. All our donkeys were eaten, and we just managed to keep ourselves alive by eating gum and skins, when news reached us of the death of the Mahdi. The effect upon our assailants was instantaneous, and fights ensued between rival factions, which tended to relieve the severity of the siege. But there was now absolutely nothing left for us to eat in Kassala, and the mudir decided to come to the best arrangement he could for a truce. Numbers of us took advantage of this opportunity to escape, and eventually succeeded in reaching Massowah.

I arrived in Egypt in the autumn of 1885, and after spending some months waiting for employment, was posted to the 10th Soudanese Battalion, which was being newly raised, and which was largely recruited from the men who had escaped from the garrisons of the Eastern Soudan.

Kitchener Pasha's attack on Osman Digna at Handoub was my first fight after joining the new army. I was in command of the detachment of Soudanese which had been left behind when the 10th Battalion marched across the desert to the Nile, and was wounded in the leg during the engagement. I should not have been able to get back, had it not been for the assistance of Bimbashi McMurdo, who, though wounded himself, took me up with him on his horse until I was out of danger.

When the 12th Battalion was raised and came down to Suakin at the end of 1888, I was promoted yousbashi (captain), and took over No. 2 Company, which I have commanded ever since. We were only two companies strong at the action of Gemaizah, but recruits rapidly came in, and early in 1889 we were completely formed.

Besant Bey was our first commanding officer, and he commanded us at the action of Tokar in 1891, when we and the 4th and 11th Battalions, under Holled Smith Pasha, defeated Osman Digna and killed so many of his emirs. Since then we have gone on working day by day, doing our best to get our men ready for the great advance, and I know that when we meet our old enemies again we shall mow them down as a reaper cuts his barley at harvest time.

Matters are different from what they were in the old days ; we have good officers, good men, and good weapons, and a thoroughly good understanding between all three. I am an old man now, but the sirdar made me a sagh (adjutant-major) on the divisional parade at Halfa just before Machell Bey left, and though I am old in years, and have seen the sun go down in many parts of the world at the close of many weary days, yet I thank God that I have lived to hear the 'Advance' sound.

Fashoda will be different from what I remember it in the days of Meg Niadôk Wad Yor, and I can scarcely hope to see my country again myself. But, such as I am, I shall serve the Government as long as my horse will carry me, and if I live to see No. 2 Company of the 12th Soudanese behave as I hope and know they will when the great day comes at Omdurman, then I shall be ready to go, and Ali Gifoon will not perhaps have lived for nothing.

'Effendimiz chôk Yashéh !' (May His Highness our Master live for ever !)

THE END.

*OCTOBER; OR, 'THE DAYS THAT ARE  
NO MORE.'*

THE months of October and March correspond to each other in several particulars, independently of their common relationship to beer. The point of resemblance which we are about to notice is of a very different character, though it may occasionally give rise to feelings not unfrequently to be found in what Sir Walter calls 'That noble fountain of emotion, the tankard.' Both March and October are distinctly the connecting links between two seasons of the year. With the beginning of March we are still in dark winter. With the end of it we find ourselves in spring. In the beginning of October we still very frequently have summer with us. But winter awaits us at the end of it. The two months are transition periods more truly than any other month out of the twelve. But they differ from each other in this important respect, that the one is leading us to the tomb of nature; the other to her resurrection. A silent, warm, bright October day, while the foliage is still thick and green, and we can still throw ourselves on the grass with perfect security, always affects us with a feeling of melancholy, as March does with a feeling of cheerfulness—the morning and evening of the year. These two, then, are what we should call particularly interesting months. There are points in which they contrast very unfavourably with their sisters, if Tennyson is right in making the months feminine, but they are certainly among the most interesting members of the family.

Not that sadness should be the sole sentiment which the month of October should inspire; it is mingled with others, producing a combination which it is very difficult to analyse. When Tennyson speaks of the happy autumn fields he gives expression to a sentiment of which most men with any music in their souls must at times have been conscious. It may be said, of course, that the autumn fields are mentioned because it happened to be autumn when the girl was singing, and that spring or summer fields would have done just as well. But the poet had in his mind something more than this: the happiness of peace and plenty, of repose and stillness, which the autumn fields, especially during the present month, seem to reflect. A great tranquillity seems to have descended

upon nature on a fine October day, and this sensation, mingled with reminiscences of a happy childhood, when we tumbled about among the reapers, or rode back in the empty wagon from the rickyard to the cornfield, contributes largely, if we mistake not, to the idea of happiness which Tennyson associates with the harvest-field.

October bears about with it this double character in more ways than one. We are now bidding farewell, with a tear in one eye, to summer joys and pleasures, but welcoming, with a smile in the other, all those which belong to the later autumn and winter. And now, if anyone may be allowed to give way to some 'divine despair' when he thinks of the days that are no more, it is surely the partridge-shooter. In the olden days I used to think partridge-shooting nearly at its best from the third week in September to the second week in October. Before the beginning of the agricultural depression, while farmers were still basking in the sunshine of prosperity which, throughout the third quarter of the present century, was almost unclouded, agricultural operations in many parts of England were still conducted in the easy-going way which the British farmer has always loved. Then, between the end of harvest and the commencement of the autumn ploughing, there used to be an interval of a fortnight or three weeks, in which the land had rest. During this period the stubble and turnips would remain quite undisturbed, and there was nothing to drive the birds away from their favourite haunts at any hour of the day. The partridge then is at his best, both for shooting and eating. He is full-grown and strong on the wing, without having got too wild to be approached, and will lie in turnips on a warm day at the end of September as well as he would at the beginning, only he takes a deal more killing when he rises. Many good judges consider that his flavour is quite lost when all the loose corn has been picked up off the ground, and he has to take to a coarser diet, in the shape of turnips. But early in October he is in his prime. Give us a day's partridge-shooting then any time between, say, September the twentieth and October the fifth, and we'll warrant it shall be better sport than at the very opening of the season. But we are betrayed into an anachronism by reminiscences of the *tempus actum*, and the thoughts of 'the days that are no more,' those real reminiscences which may well draw tears, and not idle tears, from the heart of the true sportsman. We are not prepared to stand by the above state-

ments as regards shooting, nor altogether as regards autumn, in this year of grace, 1896. We have no business to be using the present tense, and have dropped the thread of our discourse, which should have led us to the different spectacle presented by the fields now and thirty years ago during the few weeks we have described. Nowadays, no sooner has the last load been carried and stacked, than the men are at work again all over the place—either ploughing, or spreading manure, or doing some ridiculous thing or another which is called high farming. Boys, too, will be in charge of sheep among the turnips, and as soon as ever you try to mark a covey down there will be a man's head, or a white smock frock, or children in search of blackberries right in the line of flight, and you have the pleasure of seeing the birds diverted from the fine piece of cover they were making for and turned aside, either into a bare grass field, or else into your neighbour's territory.

This blackberrying nuisance is of quite modern growth. We do not remember seeing the children about the fields after harvest as we see them now. I suppose there are a great many more children than there used to be, which it is very dreadful to think of; and that in these days of depression they are driven to live on berries and other hedge fruit, like the shipwrecked people whom Mr. Pickwick had read of in '*Constable's Miscellany*.' However, the whole aspect of the happy autumn fields has been changed by the rapidity with which the garnering of one harvest is now succeeded by preparations for another, and by the irruption of the 'young barbarians' whom one fondly hoped for a time that Board schools would restrain, and so do something useful to justify their existence, if they did nothing else. But we have been deluded. They have not even done this.

But an October day among the partridges is still a great delight if the weather is fine and the birds abundant. The dew hangs heavily on the grass and turnips, and is not dried up by the sun till past noon, if then. The warm sunny, half misty, air is full of motes, and even now sometimes you may find a farm where no sound is to be heard nearer than the distant homestead. In a favourable season, such, for instance, as last year, the oaks and elms have hardly changed colour at all. The hedges indeed show signs of age, the fresh green of early summer now turning to the colour of tea-leaves. The meadows, perhaps, do not look quite so fresh as they did a month ago; and the aftermath has lost the deep

rich virgin green which it generally exhibits late into September, or till stock have been turned in to browse upon it. But still upon the whole you would say on such a day that the country wears well. The general effect is still one of unbroken greenness. The frosts have not yet made their effects very visible; though there is a sharpness in the air now and then which betrays their recent presence. Altogether it is a splendid day for a walk; the dogs will not get knocked up so soon as they would have done at the opening of the season. And now let us try this wheat stubble, for though the machine has done its work too well to leave any cover, still as it is only eleven o'clock, and the place has been lying quiet, they are very likely to be on it or somewhere close at hand.

There they go as soon as they hear the gate shut; but we shall find them in the thick white turnips which in some parts of England seem expressly reserved to teach us what partridge-shooting used to be. But October birds will not lie too close even in such cover as this till the coveys have been scattered. The dogs are soon standing: go up as quietly as you can, and if we can get within thirty yards of them something may be done, though it requires very quick and very good shooting to get a right and left in October at that distance. As it is, when the smoke has cleared away, we find that three birds are down, and the rest have gone away in two divisions. We must follow them up at this time of the year; and as the sun has now come out quite hot, the single birds will lie till you tread upon them in either turnips or thick grass, or any brambles or gorse that may be in the vicinity. Ten brace of birds bagged to one gun early in October, by following them up perseveringly and with full knowledge of their habits, are worth twenty on the first of September, when you may get a double shot at almost every covey that rises. I love an October partridge. A good bag of such birds, fairly walked up either with dogs or without, is something to be proud of. But cover is so scarce now, that few shooters care for following the coveys from field to field merely to see them rise out of distance every time; and men prefer to stand still, and have the birds driven up to them. This kind of sport is usually reserved for October, that the fields may be quite clear and the foliage not quite so thick as at the end of summer. Where the partridges are sufficiently numerous it is very good fun; and though not to be compared with shooting over dogs when *that* kind of sport existed in its perfection 'in the days that are no more,' it is perhaps

a better test of marksmanship, and demands an equal amount of coolness and presence of mind, in the shooter. What makes it inferior to the older system is that it is all shooting and no hunting. Beating with pointers or setters combines both, and many think the find quite as delightful as the kill.

But just as September has in some respects given way to October as the partridge month, so has October in turn given way to November as the pheasant month. The newspapers continue to assure us that pheasant-shooting opens on the first of October; and they further inform us on the second that in such and such places sportsmen found the 'longtails,' as they must needs be called, very plentiful. *Found* them very plentiful! as if they had to be looked for like snipe or woodcocks—as if every bird was not well known beforehand—and the number that could be killed in any given plantation accurately calculated before a gun was fired. But these amusing paragraphs are clearly a survival from the days of our great-grandfathers, when pheasants were really wild, and had to be found with dogs in any rough or woody country suited to them. This, no doubt, was excellent sport in its way, and it was necessary to pursue it in October, before all the birds had got away into the big woods. Pheasants hatched out in the corn-fields would remain about the old thick double hedges and in the small outlying copses till the month of October, where they were found with spaniels, and killed, as the reader may see in Morland's pictures. But when they got into the large woods they could not well be got at in this manner, and it was only by cutting rides and adopting the modern system of beating that big bags could be made in these extensive covers. Then, of course, October was *the* month for pheasant-shooting, and the tradition still lingers though the reality has departed. Of course pheasants are still shot in October. A few very pleasant outside days are taken by most game preservers, for the sake of killing birds which might otherwise stray away in the wrong direction. But pheasant-shooting proper, cover-shooting, as it is usually called—hares, rabbits, and woodcocks all contributing to make up the bag—does not begin till November, and cannot even then be had in perfection till the leaves are off the trees.

But a day in the October woods, the smaller woods and copses where, as I have said, pheasants can be got early in the season, how charming it is! The autumn should be sufficiently advanced for the trees to have begun to change colour without losing the

predominant hue of summer, and gold, red, and russet should be mingled sparingly with the dark and light green. Underfoot the dry fern will be in the same transition state, the pale yellow showing prettily against the rugged trunks of the oaks and elms, and smooth grey stems of the beech trees. Narrow strips of tall wood and brushwood, or patches of the same here and there, will hold the birds you are in quest of. Four guns should be plenty for the work—one at each corner: and three or four beaters and a couple of spaniels will soon flush all the pheasants that are there. They will not, generally speaking, offer high rocketing shots, and often turn back when they get to the edge of the trees, when it requires a good deal of skill to kill them clean, as they show their tails to you. After two or three hours spent in this way, we may find ourselves in a pretty open glade, where some felled trunks lying among the brown fern form a picture such as Linnell loved, and—oh that we should say so!—is more especially suggestive of lunch. Perhaps the lunch may be a picnic, and ladies may be there waiting for us, in all those varieties of costume which make art almost equal to nature. A donkey-cart or pony-chaise, perhaps a cob with a side-saddle, will be standing near. But not bicycles; no, young lady! no modern abomination of that kind intrudes upon a day devoted to old-fashioned sport.

Nec tibi currendi veniat tam dira cupido.

Such lunches are apt to be rather long ones, and as October days are short the keeper thinks it necessary, after a time, privately to remind his master that they have still got all the hedges to do. Then the party breaks up, tender farewells are exchanged, a favoured cavalier puts the fair equestrian on her cob, the men pick up their guns, and the beaters their sticks. 'This way' cries the keeper, and we begin to spend the afternoon. Issuing from the copse over a little foot-bridge, under which trickles a clear, narrow streamlet, not destitute of trout, we divide into two parties, so that every hedge may be properly taken, one gun on each side. These big double fences, sometimes spreading out into what they call 'shaws' in the north, are favourite places for the pheasants, and of the birds that escaped us in the wood, a good many will be found here. It is a treat to see a really good spaniel working a hedgerow of this description. His enthusiasm is infectious; all his movements and gestures are graceful and spirited, and bespeak the keenest interest in his work. See him prick up his ears now, and stand quivering with delight for a

moment with his nose just a little drawn back, before he makes his pounce. In he goes: up gets a cock pheasant with prodigious self-importance, and is soon laid low upon the turf, Rupert having the additional satisfaction of trotting back with him in his mouth. It is often said that a man who cannot hit a pheasant getting up before him out of a ditch bottom, with nothing to impede his view, could not hit a barn door. This, however, is not strictly true. We have seen such birds missed, and by good shots too. One is apt to shoot at a pheasant in the open before he has ceased rising, which cannot be done so readily when one stands outside of a wood, or even in a ride, for any bird that rises close to you must get clear of all immediate obstacles before you can shoot, and by that time has probably begun his horizontal flight.

Well, if the bag at the end of such a day as this amounts to twenty brace or even less, will any man pretend to say it is not good sport? We are satisfied, at all events, and wend our way home through the fresh, dewy even with the feeling that we have had a most enjoyable day. As we pass through the village and stop to leave some pheasants at a farmhouse we see preparations for festivity, and understand that farmer Ribstone—a jolly old fellow, and very like the apple whose name he bears—has his harvest home that night. It is a moot point among rural philanthropists whether the new harvest home, where all join together, or the old one like Mr. Poyser's, is the better way of celebrating this festival. The latter has been done once for all by George Eliot in a style which defies competition, and we can't describe the former because we have never seen it. But it can hardly bring master and man into the same close personal relationship as the earlier system, and it is doubtful if it led to more riot or intemperance. It is very right that harvest home should be made a Church festival, and that the labourer should be taught to understand the religious side of it. But we should have thought it was possible to combine the two, and to keep up the religious character of the new plan without eliminating the personal element which was so pleasant a feature of the old one. However, old or new, it is one of the great events of October on the country side, and as such must of course find a place in our article.

'I beat those copses to-day,' says our host after dinner, 'because the hounds are coming to-morrow morning, so if any gentleman likes to get up at six o'clock to see a cub killed, now is his time.' Cub-hunting begins much earlier than October, and

towards the end of the month fox-hunting begins in many parts, though the meets are not advertised till November. We imagine, however, that our ancestors drew little distinction between cub-hunting and fox-hunting, for in most of the old hunting pictures the trees are full of leaf, and the country looks more like the beginning of autumn than the end of it. But the pursuit of the fox up to nearly the end of October is now generally supposed to be cub-hunting, and hounds are not allowed to get away with an old fox if it can be helped. It is necessary to explore the country a little before the regular season begins, to train the young hounds, and to kill off some of the cubs where there are too many. In September and October they go out early in the morning to avoid the heat of the day; but in doing so they only follow what was the custom of the fathers of fox-hunting all the year round. They liked to catch the fox on his trail—that is, to hit on his line as he returns from his predatory midnight excursions—instead of knocking him up at noon after he had digested and slept off his supper. This last is the modern plan, and few sportsmen turn out now to join in the cub-hunting. It is a pretty sight though; the red coats of the whippers-in look very picturesque among the green foliage. But I always associate fox-hunting with bare trees and hedges, and plenty of jumping; and I remember when living in the country, I didn't like meeting the hounds coming home from cub-hunting in the morning just when I was going out partridge-shooting. It looked too much like the beginning of the end. They seemed to be intruders—to say nothing of the fact that they might have run that morning over all one's best ground, and driven the birds nobody knows where. The farmers patronise cub-hunting most. They are used to being up early, and they like an early gallop which gets them home again in time for their day's work.

As we draw on towards the end of the month we become painfully aware that the charms of external nature are beginning to lose their fascination, and that sport is the only attraction which the country has now to offer us. The change from summer to winter which takes place between the third week in October and the second week in November is sometimes, indeed, almost imperceptible. In 1895 the last days of October were hardly distinguishable from September. We remember shooting in the Midland Counties on the 28th, when from a rising ground we looked over an expanse, stretching many miles, of almost unbroken

green, scarcely flecked at any point by the finger of decay. The grey church towers peeped out from the thick rich foliage, which concealed all the rest of the building as effectually as in July. The sun was bright and hot, and it was difficult to believe that summer was really over. But this was an exceptional case. The present season is likely to be still more so in the opposite direction, for the drought will antedate the fall of the leaf as much as last year's moisture postponed it. But too frequently at this time cold rainy weather sets in; the hedges turn black; the trees droop as if conscious of the forlorn appearance they present, with a few dripping leaves still hanging on them; the fields begin to look bleak, and we long for the transition to be over, and Nature to come fairly out in her winter dress, which is always becoming to her.

During these few weeks the most ardent lover of the country lightly turns his thoughts to town. Partridge-shooting, except by driving, is quite over nowadays by the middle of the month, and driving is not within the reach of everybody every day in the week. The pleasant, easy way of sauntering out with your gun after breakfast, attended only by a boy and a steady old dog, cannot be kept up any longer. Cover-shooting is waiting for the fall of the leaf. The snipe and woodcock have not yet arrived. It is true that pike-fishing is now in its perfection. But that is cold work, and a kind of sport which every angler doesn't care for. If you are lucky enough to be a hunting man you have still two or three weeks to wait before fox-hunting is fairly afoot. When the autumn tints begin to go off, there is nothing very attractive in the landscape till the hoar frosts and winter snows begin. For men, of whom the present writer was one, whose work is in London and whose holiday terminates about this time, the return to town was not without its pleasant features. We remember when living in the Temple, at a time when there were many more residents in chambers than there are now, and the old Fleet Street taverns were in all their glory, the resort of gentlemen of good standing such as now for the most part spend their evenings at a West End club, that it was a great delight to dive into the old Cock, or Dick's, in search of any member of one's own set whom waning October might have brought back to town. How good that first steak and pint of stout used to taste after two months' absence! Thackeray tells us how good the first pint of English porter used to taste to passengers landing from India after a

sailing voyage of six months. Something like it was the first draught at the Cock ; and on a wet, chill October evening, ensconced in the box just opposite the great fire, with the simple delicacies I have mentioned before one, the sense of comfort, real comfort, was perhaps as keen as it ever could be under any circumstances. How bright and warm the London streets looked after the dreary look-out from the railway window ! But we are anticipating, and, besides, there is still the Indian summer to look forward to—the few really hot sunny days which always return to cheer us about this time before winter begins in earnest.

However, we are now saying good-bye to the real summer of 1896, and may we all live to see such another. The drought, after all, was not so bad as it at first threatened to be, and I believe that in the clay soils it has done comparatively little harm. We have had several months of the most glorious sunshine, and though the London parks and gardens began to fade before their time, the change was much less marked in the country, where, after the rain that fell towards the end of July, the grass and the foliage differed but little in appearance from their ordinary colour in an average dry season. The Eastern Counties have suffered most, but elsewhere the harvest has not been exceptionally bad, while in some quarters it has been exceptionally good. It has, of course, been a very good time for the working classes, who have had plenty of employment, so that, on the whole, from all points of view, our gains and losses have been at least equally balanced.

AT THE GREAT DURBAR.<sup>1</sup>

HE sat, cuddled up in a cream-coloured cotton blanket edged with crimson, shoo-ing away the brown rats from the curved cobs of Indian corn. The soft mists of a northern November hung over the landscape in varying density. Heavy over the dank sugar-cane patch by the well, lighter on the green fodder crop, dewy among the moisture-loving leaves of the sprouting vetches, and here, in the field of ripening maize, scarcely visible between the sparse stems. He was an old man with a thin white beard tucked away behind his ears and a kindly look on his high-featured face. Every now and then he took up a little clod of earth from the dry, crumbling ridge of soil which divided the field he was watching from the surrounding ones, and threw it carefully among the maize, saying in a gentle, grumbling voice, 'Ari, brothers ! Does no shame come to you ?'

It had no perceptible effect on the rats, who, owing to the extreme sparsity of the crop, could be seen every here and there deliberately climbing up a swaying stem to seat themselves on a cob and begin breakfast systematically. In the calm, windless silence you could almost hear the rustle and rasp of their sharp white teeth. But Nânuk Singh, as might have been predicted from his seventy and odd years of life in the fields, was somewhat hard of hearing ; somewhat near of vision also. For when so many years have been spent watching the present furrow cling to the curves of the past one, in sure and certain hope of similar furrows in the future, or in listening to the endless lamentations of a water-wheel ceasing not by day or night to proclaim an eternity of toil and harvest, both eyes and ears are apt to grow dull towards new sights and sounds. Nânuk's had, at any rate, even though the old familiar ones no longer occupied them ; fate having decreed that in his old age the peasant farmer should have neither furrows nor water-wheel of his own. How this had come about needs a whole statute book of Western laws to understand. Nânuk himself never attempted the task. To him it was, briefly, the will of God. His district officer, however, when the case fell under his notice by reason of the transfer of the land, thought

<sup>1</sup> Copyright in the United States of America, 1896, by Mrs. F. A. Steel.

differently ; and having a few minutes' leisure from office drudgery to spare for really important work, made yet one more representation regarding the scandalous rates of interest, the cruelty of time-foreclosures, and the general injustice of applying the maxim '*caveat emptor*' to transactions in which one party is practically a child and the other a Jew. A futile representation, of course, since the Government, so experts affirm, is not strong enough to attack the Frankenstein monster of Law which it has created.

In a measure, nevertheless, old Nânuk was right in attributing his ruin to fate, since it had followed naturally from the death of his three sons. One, the eldest, dying of malarial fever in the prime of life, leaving, alas ! a young family of girls. Another, the youngest, swept off by cholera just as his hand began to close firmly round his dead brother's plough-handle. The third, when on the eve of getting his discharge from a frontier regiment in order to take his brothers' places by his father's side, being struck down ingloriously in one of the petty border raids of which our Punjab peasant soldiers have always to bear the brunt.

And this loss of able hands led, inevitably, to the loss of ill-kept oxen ; while from the lack of well-cattle came that gradual shrinkage of the irrigated area where some crop is certain—rain or no rain—which means a less gradual sinking further and further into debt ; until, as had been the case with Nânuk, the owner loses all right in the land save the doubtful one of toil. Even this had passed from the old man's slackening hold after his wife died, and the daughters-in-law, with starvation staring them in the face, drifted away back to their own homes, leaving him to live as best he could on the acre or so of unirrigated land lent to him out of sheer charity. For public opinion still has some power over the usurer in a village of strong men, and all his fellows respected old Nânuk, who stood six feet two, barefoot, and had tales to tell of the gentle art of singlestick as applied to the equitable settling of accounts in the old days, before Western laws had taken the job out of the creditor's hands.

Strangely enough, however, Nânuk, as he sat coping inadequately with the brown rats, felt less resentment against the usurer who had robbed him, or the law which permitted the robbery, than he did against the weather. The former had made no pretence of favouring him ; the latter, year after year, had tempted his farmer's soul to lavish sowings by copious rain at seed time, and thereafter withheld the moisture necessary for a bare return

of measure for measure. Briefly, he had gambled in grain, and he had lost. Lost hopelessly in this last harvest of maize, since, when the sound cobs should be separated from those which the wanton teeth had spoilt, they would not yield the amount of Government revenue which the old man had to pay; certainly would not do so if the cobs became scarcer day by day and the rats more throng. In fact, the necessity for action ere matters grew worse appeared to strike Nânuk, making him, after a time, draw out a small sickle and begin to harvest the remaining stalks one by one.

'Bullah! neighbour Nânuk,' cried the new man who, better equipped for the tasks with sons and cattle, was driving the wheel and curving the furrows for the usurer, 'I would for thy sake the task was harder. And as if the crop were not poor enough, the dissolute rats must needs play the wanton with the half of it. But 'tis the same all over the land, and between them and the revenue we poor folk of the plough will have no share.'

Nânuk stood looking meditatively at a very fine cob out of which a pair of sharp white teeth were taking a last nibble, while a pair of wicked black eyes watched him fearlessly.

'They are God's creatures also, and have a right to live on the soil as we others,' he said slowly.

'Then they should pay the revenue,' grumbled Dittu. 'Why should *you*, who have no crop whereon to pay? *Ai teri!*' he added sharply to one of the oxen he was driving to their work, 'sleepest thou? and the well silent! Dost want to bring me to Nânuk's plight?'

So, with a prod of the goad, he passed on, leaving old Nânuk still looking at the brown rat on the corn cob. Why, indeed, should he have to pay for God's other creatures? In the old days justice would have been meted out to such as he. The crop would have been divided into heaps, so many for the owner of the soil, so many for the tiller, so many for the State. Then if *Puramêshvar*<sup>1</sup> sent rats instead of rain the heaps were smaller. That was all. And if the equity of this had been patent to those older rulers, who had scarcely given a thought in other ways to the good of their subjects, why should it not be patent to those new ones who, God keep them! gave justice without respect of persons, so far as in them lay? There must be a mistake somewhere; the facts could not have been properly placed before the *Lât-sahib*—that vice-regent of God upon earth. This conviction came home slowly to

<sup>1</sup> The Great God.

the old man as he finished his harvesting; slowly but surely, so that when he had spread the cobs out to dry on his cotton blanket he walked over to the well, and, between the whiffs of the general pipe, hinted that he thought of laying the matter before the authorities. 'I will take the produce of my field,' he said, 'in my hand—it will not be more than five *seers* when the good is sifted from the bad—and I will say to the *Lât-sahib*, "This is because Puraméshwar sent rats instead of rain. Take your share, and ask no more."

Dittu, the new man, laughed scornfully. 'Better take a rat also, since all parties to the case must be present by the law.'

He intended it as a joke, but Nânuk took it quite seriously. 'That is true,' he assented; 'I will take a rat also; then there can be no mistake.'

That evening, when he sat with his cronies on the mud *dâis* beneath the *peepul* tree, where he was welcome to a pull out of anybody's pipe, he spoke again of his intention. The younger folk laughed, but the seniors thought that it could at least do no harm. Nânuk's case was a hard one; it was quite clear he could not pay the revenue, and it was better to go to the fountain-head in such matters, since underlings could do nothing but take fees. So, while the stars came out in the evening sky, they ate and told tales of Nausherwân, and many another worthy whose memory lingers in native minds by reason of perfectly irrational acts of despotic clemency, such as even Socialists do not dream of nowadays. The corn cobs then being harvested, dried, and shelled, he set to work with the utmost solemnity on rat traps; but here at once he realised his mistake. By harvesting his own crop he had driven the little raiders further afield; and though he could easily have caught one in his neighbour's patch, a desire to deal perfectly fairly with those who, in his experience, dealt perfectly fairly with facts, made him stipulate for a rat out of his own.

This necessitated the baiting of his property with some of the corn in order to attract the wanton creatures again; and even then, though he sat for hours holding the cord by which an earthen dish was to be made to fall upon the unsuspecting intruder, he was unsuccessful.

'Trra! not catch rats!' cried a most venerable old pantaloon to whom he applied for advice, remembering him in his boyhood as one almost god-like in his supreme knowledge of such things. 'Wait awhile; 'tis a trick—a mere trick—but when you once

know it you cannot forget it.' All that day the old men sat together in the sunshine, profoundly busy, and towards evening they went forth together to the field, chattering and laughing like a couple of schoolboys. It was long after dusk ere they returned, full of mutual recrimination. The one had coughed too much, the other had wheezed perpetually ; there was no catching of rats possible under such circumstances. Then the old pantaloons went a-hunting by himself, full of confidence, only to return dejected ; then Nânuk, full of determination, sat up all one moonlight night in the field where, now that he had no crop to benefit by it, the night dew gathered heavily on every leaf and blade—on Nânuk, too, as he sat crouched up in his cotton blanket, thinking of what he should say to the *Lât-sahib* when the rat was caught, which it was not. Finally, with angry misgivings as to the capabilities of the present generation of boys, the old pantaloons suggested the offering of one whole anna for the first rat captured in Nânuk's maize-field. Before the day was over a score or two of the village lads, long-limbed, bright-eyed, were vociferously maintaining the prior claims of as many brown rats, safely confined in little earthen pipkins with a rag tied round the top. They stood in a row, like an offering of sweets to some deity, round Nânuk's bed, for, as was not to be wondered at after his night watch, he was down with an attack of the chills. That was nothing new. He had had them every autumn since he was born ; but he was not accustomed to be surrounded on such occasions by brown rats appealing to him for justice. It ended in his, with feverish hands, giving one anna to each of the boys, and reserving his selection until he was in a more judicial frame of mind. Still, it would not do to starve God's creatures, so every morning while the fever lingered, for it had got a grip on him somehow, he went round the pipkins and fed the rats with some of the maize. And every morning, rather to his relief, there were fewer of them to feed, since they nibbled their way out once they discovered that the top of their prison was but cloth. So as he lay, sometimes hot, sometimes cold, the idea came to him, foolishly enough, that this was a process of divine selection, and that if he only waited the day when but one rat should remain his mission would bear the seal of success. An idea like this only needs presentation to a mind, or lack of mind, like old Nânuk's. So what with the harvesting and the rat-catching, and the fever and the omen-awaiting, it was close

on the new year when, with a brown rat, now quite tame, tied up in a pipkin, some five *seers* of good grain tied up in the corner of his cotton blanket, and Heaven knows what a curious conglomeration of thought bound up in his still feverish brain, the old man set out from his village to find the *Lât-sahib*. Such things are still done in India, such figures are still to be seen, making some civilised people stand out of the road bare-headed, as they do to a man on his way to the grave—a man who has lived his life, whose day is past.

Owing also to the fever and the paying for rats, &c., old Nânuk's pockets were ill provided for the journey; but that mattered little in a country where a pilgrimage on foot is in itself presumptive evidence of saintship. Besides, the brown rat, to which Nânuk had attached a string lest one of the parties to the suit might escape him on the road, was a perpetual joy to the village children, who scarcely knew if it were greater fun to peep at it in its pipkin or see it peeping out of the old man's cotton blanket when in the evenings it nibbled away at its share of Nânuk's dinner. They used to ask endless questions as to why he carried it about, and what he was going to do with it, until, half in jest, half in earnest, he told them he was the *mudâ-ee* (plaintiff) and the rat the *mudee-âla* (defendant) in a case they were going to lay before the *Lât-sahib*, an explanation perfectly intelligible to even the babes and sucklings, who in a Punjabi village nowadays lisp in numbers of petitions and pleaders.

So the *mudâ-ee* and *mudee-âla* tramped along together amicably, sometimes by curving wheel tracks among the furrows, ancient rights-of-way over the wide fields, as transient yet immutable as the furrows themselves; and there, with the farmer's eye-heritage of generations, he noted each change of tint in the growing wheat, from the faintest yellowing to the solid dark green with its promise of a full ear to come. Sometimes by broad lanes, telling yet once more the strange old Indian tale of transience and permanence, of death and renewed birth, in the deep grass-set ruts through which the traffic of centuries had passed rarely, yet inevitably. And here with the same knowledgeable eye he would mark the homing herds of village cattle, and infer from their condition what the unseen harvest had been which gave them their fodder. Finally, out upon the hard white high-road, so different from the others in its self-sufficient straightness, its squared heaps of nodular limestone ready for repairs, its

elaborate arrangements for growing trees where they never grew before, and where even Western orders will not make them grow. And here Nânuk's eyes still found something familiar in the great wains creaking along in files to add their quota of corn sacks to the mountain of wheat cumbering the railway platforms all along the line. Yet even this was in its essence new, provoking the wonder in his slow brain how it could be that the increased demand for wheat and its enhanced price should have gone hand-in-hand with the financial ruin of the grower.

To say sooth, however, such problems as these flitted but vaguely through the old man's thought, and even his own spoliation was half forgotten in the one great object of that long journey which, despite his cheerful patience, had sapped his strength sadly. To find the *Lât-sahib*, to make his salaam, and bid the *mudee-âla-jee* do so likewise, to lay the produce of the field at the sahib's feet, and say that *Puramêshwar* had sent rats instead of rain—that in itself was sufficient for the old man as he trudged along doggedly, his eyes becoming more and more dazed by unfamiliar sights as he neared the big city.

'Bullah!' said the woman of whom he begged a night's lodging. 'If we were to house and feed the wanderers on this road we should have to starve ourselves. And thou art a Sikh. Go to thine own people. 'Tis each for each in this world.' That was a new world to Nânuk.

'Doth thy rat do tricks?' asked the children critically. 'What, none? Trra! we can see rats of that mettle any day in the drains, and there was a man here yesterday whose rat cooked bread and drew water. Ay! and his goat played the drum. That was a show worth seeing.'

So Nânuk trudged on.

'See the *Lât-sahib*,' sneered the yellow-legged police constable when, after much wandering through bewildering crowds, the old Sikh found himself at a meeting of roads, each one of which was barred by a baton. 'Which *Lât-sahib*—the big one or the little?'

'The big one,' replied Nânuk stoutly. There was no good in underlings that he knew.

Police constable number Seventy-five called over to his crony number Ninety-six on the next road.

'Ari, brother! Here is another *durbari*. Canst let him in on thy beat? I have no room on mine.' And then they both laughed, whereat old Nânuk, taking courage, moved on a step,

only to be caught and dragged back, hustled, and abused. What ! was the Great Durbar for the like of him—the Great Durbar on which lakhs and crores had been spent—the Great Durbar all India had been thinking of for months ! *Wâh !* Whence had he come if he had not heard of the Great Durbar, and what had he thought was the meaning of the Venetian masts and triumphal arches, the flags and the watered roads ? Did he think such things were always ? *Ari !* if it came to such ignorance as that, mayhap he would not know what *this* was coming along the road.

It was a disciplined tramp of feet, an even glitter of bayonets, a straight line of brown faces, a swing and a sweep, as a company of the Guides came past in their *khâgi* and crimson uniform. Old Nânuk looked at it wistfully.

‘Nay, brother,’ he said, ‘I know that. ‘Twas my son’s regiment, God rest him !’

‘Thou shouldst sit down, old man,’ said a bystander kindly. ‘Of a truth thou canst go no further till the show is over. Hark ! there are the guns again. ‘Twill be Bairânpore likely, since Hurriâna has gone past. *Wâh !* it is a show—a rare show !’

So down the watered road, planted out in miserable attempts at decoration with barbers’ poles unworthy of a slum in the East End, came a bevy of Australian horses, wedged at a trot between huge kettledrums, which were being whacked barbarically by men who rose in their stirrups with the conscientious precision of a newly imported competition-wallah. Then more Australian horses again in an *orfévrerie* barouche lined with silver, where, despite the glow of colour, the blinding flash of diamonds in an Indian sun, despite even the dull wheat-green glitter of the huge emerald tiara about the turban, the eye forgot these things to fix itself upon the face which owned them all ; a face haggard, sodden, superlatively handsome even in its soddenness, indifferent, but with an odd consciousness of the English boy who—dressed as for a flower show—sat silently beside his charge; behind them with a clatter and flutter of pennons came a great trail of wild horsemen, showing, as they swept past, dark, lowering faces among the sharp spear points.

And the guns beat on their appointed tale, till, with the last, a certain satisfaction came to that sodden face, since there were none short in the salute—as yet. The measure of his misdoings was not full *as yet*.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> A reduction in the number of guns is the first punishment for bad administration.

The crowd ebbed and flowed irregularly to border the straight white roads, where at intervals the great tributary chiefs went backwards and forwards to pay their State visits, but Nânuk and his rat—the plaintiff and the defendant—waited persistently for their turn to pass on. It was long in coming; for even when the last flash and dash of barbaric splendour had disappeared, the roar of cannon began louder, nearer, regular to a second in its even beat.

‘That is the *Lât*-salute,’ said one man to another in the crowd. ‘Let us wait and see the *Lât*, brother, ere we go.’

Nânuk overheard the words, and looked along the road anxiously, then stood feeling more puzzled than ever; for there was nothing to see here but a plain closed carriage with a thin red and gold trail of the body-guard behind it and before. The sun was near to its setting, and sent a red angry flare upon a bank of clouds which had risen in the east, and the dust of many feet swept past in whirls before a rising wind.

‘It will rain ere nightfall,’ declared the crowd, contentedly, as it melted away citywards. ‘And the crops will be good, praise to God.’

Once more Nânuk overheard, and this time a glad recognition seemed to rouse him from a dream. Yes! the crops would be good. Down by the well, on the land he and his had ploughed for so many years, the wheat would be green—green as those emeralds above that sodden face.

‘The *Lât* has gone out,’ joked Constable Seventy-five as he went off duty; ‘but there are plenty of other things worth seeing to such an ignoramus as thou.’

True; only by this time Nânuk was almost past aught save that all things were unfamiliar in those miles and miles of regiments and rajahs, electric lights and newly macadamised roads, tents and make-believe gardens, all pivoted, as it were, round the Royal Standard of England, which was planted out in the centre of the Viceroy’s camp. As he wandered aimlessly about the vast canvas city, hustled here, sent back there, the galloping orderlies, the shuffling elephants, the carriages full of English ladies, the subalterns cracking their tandem whips, and the native outriders had but one word for him.

‘*Hut! Hut!*’ (Stand back—stand back!)

A heavy drop of rain came as a welcome excuse to his dogged perseverance for sheltering awhile under a thorn bush. He was

more tired than hungry, though he had not tasted food that day ; and it needed a sharp nip from the defendant's teeth, as it sought for something eatable in the folds of his blanket, to remind him that others of God's creatures had a better appetite than he. But what was he to give ? There was the five *seers* of grain still, of course ; but who was to apportion the shares ; who was to say, ' This much for the plaintiff, this much for the defendant, this much for the State.' The familiar idea seemed to give him support in the bewildering inrush of new impressions, and he held to it as a drowning man in a waste of unknown waters clutches at a straw.

Nevertheless, the parties to the suit must not be allowed to starve meanwhile, and if they took equal shares surely that would be just.

The rain now fell in torrents, and the kikar-bush scarcely gave him any shelter as with a faint smile he sat watching the brown rat at work upon the corn, and counting the number of grains the wanton teeth appropriated as their portion. For so much, and no more, would be his also. It was not a sumptuous repast, but uncooked maize requires mastication, and that took up time. So that it was dark ere he stood up, soaked through to the skin, and looked perplexedly at the long lines of twinkling lights which had sprung up around him. And hark ! what was that ? It was the dinner bugle at a mess close by, followed, as by an echo, by another and another and another ; quite a chorus of cheerful invitations to dinner. But Nânuk knew nothing of such feasts as were spread there in the wilderness. He had lived all his life on wheat and lentils, though, being a Sikh, he would eat wild boar or deer if it could be got, or take a tot of country spirits on occasion to make life seem less dreary. He stood listening, shivering a little with the cold, and then went on his way, since the *Lât-sahib* must be found, the case decided before the numbing forgetfulness crept over everything.

Sometimes he inquired of those he met—more often he did not, but wandered on aimlessly through the maze of light, driven and hustled as he had been by day. And as he wandered the bands of the various camps were playing, say, the March in 'Tannhäuser,' or 'Linger longer, Loo.' But sooner or later they all paused to break suddenly into a stave or two of another tune, as the colonel gave 'the Queen' to his officers.

Of all this, again, Nânuk knew nothing. Even at the best of

times he had been ignorant as a babe unborn of anything beyond his fields, and now he remembered nothing save that he and the brown rat were suitors in a case against *Puramēshwar* and the State.

So the night passed. It was well on into the chilliest time before the dawn when—the slumber which comes to all the world for that last dead hour of darkness having rid him of all barriers—he found himself beneath what had been the goal of his hopes ever since he had first seen its strange white rays piercing the night—the great ball of electric light which crowned the flagstaff whereon the Standard of England hung dank and heavy; for the wind had dropped, the rain had ceased, and a thick white mist clung close even to the round bole of the mast, which was set in the centre of a stand of chrysanthemums. The colours of the blossoms were faintly visible in the downward gleam of the light spreading in a small circle through the mist.

So far good. This was the '*Standard of Sovereignty*,' no doubt—the '*Lamp of Safety*'—the guide by day and night to faithful subjects seeking justice before the king. This Nānuk understood; this he had heard of in those tales of Nausherwān and his like, told beneath the village *peepul* tree.

Here, then, he would stay—he and the defendant—till the dawn brought a hearing. He sat down, his back to the flowers, his head buried in his knees. And as he sat, immovable, the mist gathered upon him as it had gathered in the field. But he was not thinking now what he should say to the *Lât-sahib*. He was past that.

He did not hear the jingle and clash of arms which, after a time, came through the fog, or the voice which said cheerfully—

"Appy Noo Year to you, mate!"

"Same to you, Tommy, and many of 'em; but it's rather you nor I, for it's chillin' to the vitals."

They were changing guards on this New Year's morning, and Private Smith, as he took his first turn under the long strip of canvas stretched as a sun-shelter between the two sentry-boxes, acknowledged the truth of his comrade's remark by beating his arms upon his breast like any cabman. Yet he was hot enough in his head, for he had been singing '*Auld lang Syne*' and drinking rum for the greater part of the night, and, though sufficiently sober to pass muster on New Year's Eve, was drunk enough to be intensely patriotic. So, as he walked up and down,

there was a little lilt in his step which attempted to keep time to the stave of 'God save our gracious Queen,' which he was whistling horribly out of tune. On the morrow—or, rather, to-day, since the dawn was at hand—there was to be the biggest review in which he had ever taken part ; six and twenty thousand troops marching up to the Royal Standard and saluting ! They had been practising it for weeks, and the thrill of it, the pride and power of it, had somehow got into Private Smith's head—with the rum. It made him take a turn beyond that strip of canvas, round the flagstaff he was supposed to guard.

'Alt ! 'oo goes there ?'

The challenge rang loudly, rousing Nânuk from a dream which was scarcely less unreal than the past twelve hours of waking had been to his ignorance. He stumbled up stiffly—a head taller than the sentry—and essayed a salaam.

'Ullo ! What the devil are you doin' here ? *Hut*, you nigger ! Goramighty ! wot's that ?'

It was the defendant, which Nânuk had brought out to salaam also, and which, alarmed at the sudden introduction, began darting about wildly at the end of its string. Private Smith fell back a step, and then pulled himself together with a violent effort, uncertain if the rat were real ; but the cold night air was against him.

'Washer-man ?—Washer doin'-ere ?—Washer-got ?' he asked, conglomerately, and Nânuk, understanding nothing, went down on his knees the better to untie the knot in the corner of his blanket. '*Poggle*,'<sup>1</sup> commented Private Smith, recovering himself as he looked down at the heap of maize, the defendant, and the old man talking about *Puramêshwar*. Then, being in a benevolent mood, he wagged his head sympathetically. 'Pore old Johnny ! wot's 'e want, with 'is rat and 'is popcorn ? Fine lookin' old chap, though—but we licked them Sickies, and, by gum ! we'll lick 'em again, if need be !'

The thought made him begin to whistle once more as he bent unsteadily to look at something which glittered faintly as the old man laid it on the top of the pile of corn.

It was his son's only medal.

'Hillo !' said Private Smith, bringing himself up with a lurch, 'so that is it, eh, mate ? Gor-save-a-Queen ! Now wot's up, sonny ? 'Orse Guards been a-doing wot they didn't ought to 'ave done ? Well, that ain't no noos, is it, comrade ? But we'll drink the old

<sup>1</sup> *Pagul*—mad.

lady's 'elth all the same. Lordy ! if you've bin doin' extra dooty on the rag all night you won't mind a lilick o' the old lap—eh ? Lor' bless you !—I don' want it. I've had as mush as me and Lee-Mitford can carry 'ome without takin' a day-tour by orderly room —Woy ! you won't, won't yer ? Come now, Johnny, don't be a fool—it's rum, I tell yer, and you Sickies aint afraid o' rum. Wot ! you won't drink 'er 'elth, you mutineering nigger ? Then I'll make yer. Feel that—now then, "Ere's a 'elth untow her Majesty."

Perhaps it was the unmistakable prick of a bayonet in his stomach, perhaps it was the equally unmistakable smell of the liquor arousing a craving for comfort in the old man, but he suddenly seized the flask which Private Smith had dragged from his pocket, and, throwing his head back, poured the contents down his throat ; the action—due to his desire not to touch the bottle with his lips—giving him an almost ludicrous air of eagerness.

Private Smith burst into a roar of laughter.

'Gor-save-the-Queen !' And as he spoke the first gun of the hundred and one which are fired at daybreak on the anniversary of her Most Gracious Majesty's assumption of the title *Kaiser-i-Hind* boomed out sullenly through the fog.

But Nâruk did not hear it. He had stumbled to his feet and fallen sideways to the ground.

'I gather, then,' remarked the surgeon-captain precisely, 'that before gun-fire this morning you found the old man in a state of collapse below the flagstaff—is this so ?'

Private Smith, sober to smartness and smart to stiffness, saluted ; but there was an odd trepidation on his face. 'Yes, sir—I—I done my best for 'im, sir. I put 'im in the box, sir, and give 'im my greatcoat, and I rub 'is 'ands and feet, sir. I done my level best for 'im, not being able, you see, sir, to go off guard. I couldn't do no more.'

'You did very well, my man ; but if you had happened to have some stimulant—any alcohol, for instance.'

Private Smith's very smartness seemed to leave him in a sudden slackness of relief. 'Which it were a tot of rum, sir, as I 'appened to 'ave in my greatcoat pocket. It done 'im no 'arm, sir, did it ?'

The surgeon-captain smiled furtively. 'It saved his life, probably ; but you might have mentioned it before. How much did he take ?'

'About 'arf a pint, sir—more nor less.' Private Smith spoke under his breath with an attempt at regret; then he became loquacious. 'Beggin' your pardon, sir, but I was a bit on myself, and 'e just poured it down like as it was milk, an' then 'e tumbled over and I thought 'e was dead, and it sobered me like. So I done my level best for 'im all through.'

Perhaps he had; for old Nânuk Singh found a comfortable spot in which to spend his remaining days when the regimental doolie carried him that New Year's morning from the flagstaff to the hospital. He lay ill of rheumatic fever for weeks, and when he recovered it was to find himself and his rat quite an institution among the gaunt, listless convalescents waiting for strength in their long dressing-gowns. The story of how the old Sikh had drunk the Queen's health has assumed gigantic proportions under Private Smith's care, and something in the humour and the pathos of it tickled the fancy of his hearers, who, when the unfailing phrase, 'An' so I done my level best for him, I did,' came to close the recital, would turn to the old man and say,—

'Pore old Johnny—an' Gord knows wot 'e wanted with 'is rat and 'is popcorn!'

That was true, since Nânuk Singh did not remember even the name of his own village; and, though he still talked about the plaintiff and the defendant, *Puramêshwar* and the State, he was apparently content to await his chance of a hearing at another and a greater durbar.

F. A. STEEL.

**THE WIT AND WISDOM OF LORD WESTBURY**

THE fame of lawyers is short-lived or it survives in the least admirable of their achievements. Thus Thurlow is remembered for his strong language, Eldon for his tenacity of office, Lyndhurst for his brilliant lack of principle, and many others might be cited whose names, to the majority of mankind, represent anything rather than the finer sides of their character. If not exactly *hostes humani generis*, great lawyers always run the risk of being regarded by posterity as examples of success rather than merit. If a statesman is abused violently by one section of the public, he is as warmly defended by the other, and his virtues, real and imaginary, will be set before the world no less surely than his failings will be exaggerated. Besides, in this country up to the present we have always been ready and even eager to give our statesmen credit for patriotic rather than personal motives if they allow us the slightest chance of taking the charitable line, while in politics the lawyer rarely gets credit for principles; it is assumed that he regards his party as he regards his clients, and its tenets as he does his brief. Anyone who is acquainted with political lawyers knows that there are some exceptions to this rule, and that these are not always to be found among the least brilliant of the species; but it is not easy to convince the mass of men of the discovery, and there are constituencies to be found where a candidate 'described'—as the police reports have it—'as a journalist' has more chance of being selected by his party than a lawyer. When, however, the lawyer adds to the traditional distrust of his class the personal dislike entertained by stupid people, and, not unnaturally, against those who make them ridiculous, he cannot expect to be over-kindly treated by posterity. This has been the sad fate of Lord Westbury, and his caustic sayings have been remembered against him, while his more solid achievements have been forgotten.

Probably not one in ten of those who are so vigorously assailing the law of divorce as it at present exists recalls to mind that the great protagonist in the Commons on behalf of that hated measure was the same sharp-tongued Erastian who spoke of 'the

inferior person of the Trinity' and 'dismissed Hell with costs' in the Upper House. This will not make the Act more respectable in the eyes of its enemies; but it is certain that it was the almost unaided efforts of Sir Richard Bethell, exercised for weeks in Committee, that enabled Lord Palmerston's Government to make it law. There have been few more notable Parliamentary duels than that waged over this measure between Bethell and Mr. Gladstone, and it is not easy to say which had the better of the other in argument. The skill, tact, and ingenuity required to pilot such a bill through the shoals of Committees in the face of so formidable an opponent may be easily imagined by those who have the most superficial knowledge of the proceedings of Parliament; and we must remember that these qualities had to be exercised by a man who had spent the whole day in court, and from the early hours of the morning had been engrossed in the private business of his clients as well as in the duties of a law officer of the Crown. The bill was fought as stubbornly as a bill ever was, and with as much ingenuity as Mr. Gladstone could bring to bear; but in readiness of resource and ability to meet the most subtle amendments we do not find that the Attorney-General was ever lacking, while the episode is also interesting as being one of the few occasions on which we can safely affirm that Bethell entertained a real respect for the intellect of his antagonist, and treated him accordingly.

The following passage of arms occurred on the second reading. After a lengthy and able exposition of the principles of the bill, the Attorney-General turned to the leader of the Opposition to the measure and thus proceeded:—'If the right hon. gentleman had lived—thank Heaven he did not—in the Middle Ages, when invention was racked to find terms of eulogium for the *subtilissimi doctores*, how great would have been his reputation!' Mr. Gladstone replied later on in the debate:—'My hon. and learned friend complimented me upon the subtlety of my understanding, and it is a compliment of which I feel the more the force since it comes from a gentleman who possesses such a plain, straightforward, John Bull-like character of mind—*rusticus, abnormis sapiens, crassaque Minerva*. Therefore, and by the force of contrast, I feel the compliment to be ten times more valuable.' Later on, in the discussion of the bill in Committee, Mr. Gladstone strenuously supported an amendment to give the wife equal facilities for divorce with the husband, and thereby laid himself open to a

neat retort from Bethell, who said, 'How is it that the right hon. gentleman has been aware that injuries have been perpetrated year after year and century after century and has not brought the subject under the consideration of the House? The present bill need not, however, be the end-all of legislation upon the subject. By this bill we shall create a tribunal which may hereafter have to administer other laws made under happier auspices. In what way do these hon. gentlemen think that they have presented themselves to the country? Do they suppose that after having expressed their intention of advocating in every way the principle of the indissolubility of marriage, they will be listened to with credit when they move amendments which propose to afford further facilities for obtaining divorces?' In replying, Mr. Gladstone charged Bethell with being a 'hewer of wood and drawer of water' for the Ministry, to which Bethell was (according to 'Hansard') 'understood to say, "It is true." But the relations between the combatants were never other than polite, and when it was all over the Attorney-General received a letter from Mr. Gladstone, expressing regret for any word that he had used during the debate which might have given pain.

Intellectual arrogance, a kind of *ὕβρις* arising from conscious superiority to his rivals, is the true foundation of Bethell's unpopularity. If it is impossible to avoid being continually reminded how clever you are when compared with other fellows, it is at least the better part of discretion to avoid pointing it out to them in so many words. If you persist in calling attention to the inferior ability of your competitors or superiors in station, not only by achievements but also by epigram, it will be a strange thing if the fools do not rise some day and crush you by force of numbers if not of intellect. This was the tragedy of Bethell's life. At first sight it is merely the career of the successful lawyer, great abilities well and persistently directed towards professional success, and then, owing to some blunder, an unfortunate appointment and subsequent retirement from office. The circumstances which actually led to his retirement would probably, in the case of a popular man, not have ended in a vote of censure, but the majority of mankind, represented by the majority of the House of Commons, took the opportunity of punishing the man who had been expressing his contempt for them throughout his life. The unhappy part of the affair was that it was the unsuspected amiability and kindness that lurked beneath the dreaded tongue of the satirist

which landed him in a situation where his enemies might find an opportunity for their revenge.

The same quality which on the one side was a failing, was on the other the cause of his almost unequalled success as an advocate: a superb self-confidence grounded on an accurate judgment of his own abilities and knowledge never allowed him to yield to an opponent or bow before a judicial decision. He moved without hesitation or stumbling among the mazes of Equity on his call to the Bar, when success in those fields was regarded as far less open to ability and industry than it is at present. For some years after his call his income doubled itself year by year with arithmetical exactness; he assimilated law, as is the case in a few rare minds, like an atmosphere to which his nature was native, and gave it out again in clear and limpid streams of language which carried conviction into the recesses of judicial minds even the most impenetrable to argument. 'When did you acquire or inherit the Dean Swift-like power of putting the right word in the right place?' wrote Lord Granville to him late in life. He replied to a somewhat similar question on another occasion, 'From my earliest youth I have always endeavoured to frame my language on that of the Old Testament.' Whether this is to be taken as an instance of his irony, like the famous address on 'Christianity' which amused or scandalised folks when he was Attorney-General, he certainly possessed the gift of lucid and impressive language to a remarkable degree, never since equalled even by his most illustrious successors. He probably owed it in no small measure to a close and persistent study of the classics during his career at Oxford, both as student and coach, where he won distinction at an age more common in mediæval than modern times, and the love of the classic writers, which he never lost, gave him a command of correct and appropriate language and a nicety of literary taste which never deserted him. What he seems to have inherited from his father was the belief in his (Richard Bethell's) abilities. The father never doubted for an instant of his son's success in life, and presented him to the Master of Wadham in short jacket at the age of fourteen as a youthful prodigy; and, indeed, he never belied any of his fond parent's predictions, which is more than can be said for ninety-nine per cent. of youthful prodigies. His relations with his parents show his character in its pleasantest aspects. His mother died early in his career, and his father was habitually unfortunate in his struggles with the world, but Richard never

treated him with anything but the greatest affection and respect, living in the most frugal style to provide for him, and watching over him to the last with the most affectionate solicitude.

In after years Bethell's advice to young advocates was, 'Never give in to a judge,' and on that maxim he acted himself through life; whether, if followed, it is likely to prove as useful to others of talents less conspicuous it may be doubted, but contempt for the Bench, whether real or feigned, he never hesitated to express.

The absurd story of the judge who begged him to remember that he was a vertebrate animal, who claimed to be treated by him with as much consideration at least as the Almighty would show to a black-beetle, is a fond invention of later days; but there are enough incidents on record, both in Mr. Nash's admirable 'Life of Lord Westbury' and elsewhere, to demonstrate the attitude he assumed.

When he took silk he followed the custom on the Equity side of selecting a particular Court to practise in. His choice fell on that presided over by Vice-Chancellor Shadwell, a good, easy man of ability, not capable, however, of coping with the powerful intellect with which he was in daily contact. The result was, as in these circumstances it always must be, that the advocate of extraordinary talents established a complete ascendancy over the mind of the judge of ordinary gifts, so that the legal wits, quoting Scripture for their purpose, ere long said that 'Shadwell had set up an altar in Bethell whereat to worship.' An angry rival on one occasion so far forgot himself and the respect due to the Court as to throw down his brief and exclaim that it was useless arguing in a Court where Bethell alone was listened to, on which Bethell pleasantly suggested that the Court should adjourn until his learned friend had recovered his temper. As an instance of the way in which he handled 'his judge' we may quote the following:—In a case concerning an architect Bethell opened by an elaborate definition of an architect, his duties, responsibilities, &c. The Vice-Chancellor, not unnaturally impatient, said, 'Come, come, Mr. Bethell, we all know what an architect is,' to which Bethell replied nothing, but commenced his elaborate explanation all over again and pursued it to the bitter end, while the unhappy Shadwell probably 'wished he hadn't spoken.' A phrase which has now passed into the language seems to have been coined by him on some occasion when, annoyed by judicial imperviousness to his argument, he turned round to the other counsel with a look on his face betoken-

ing intense amusement and said, in those clear tones which carried so far, 'His Lordship says that he will turn it over in what he is pleased to term his mind.' He may have thought the sarcasm too good to be lost and employed it on other occasions. 'What fools these judges are!' he exclaimed once, when a case was produced in direct conflict with an opinion he had just given; and that indeed was the principle upon which he seems to have acted throughout his professional life; but not only judges were the victims of his tongue. Once, when appearing in some case against Malins, afterwards the much reversed Vice-Chancellor, his opponent summed up his case with considerable wealth of language and appeared to have made some impression on the Court. Hardly had he resumed his seat when the voice of Bethell was heard murmuring in his carefully emphasised tones, 'How fatal a gift is fluency!' Needless to say, the utterance of this aphorism at that critical moment impaired considerably the effect of the preceding speech. Such a sarcasm was justified by the interests of his client, but on occasion he could be cruel without an adequate reason. A certain young counsel who had once or twice changed his name and added to it at the demand either of vanity or cupidity, coming into Court one day received a pleasant nod from Bethell, who knew him slightly. The delight of the junior at receiving so marked an attention from so great a man was somewhat marred when Bethell turned to him again, and regarding him with curiosity said, 'And pray, sir, what may your name be now?'

The effect of all his remarks was immensely heightened by the tone and manner in which they were delivered. This may almost be described as mincing, so precise and studied was it; it savoured of rank affectation, but it is doubtful if affectation was the cause of it. The necessity he was under for years of speaking slowly and distinctly in tuition may have been its origin, but whatever its source the habit clung to him through life, and was recognised as his natural mode of expression. This slow and deliberate way of speaking lent additional point to the sharp sayings which he addressed to the Bench, and when he found himself before the Lords Justices they were more frequent than when he was arguing in the Court below, as doubtless the conflict of wits was keener. The bouts between himself and Lord Justice Knight Bruce were notorious and of constant occurrence. That great judge to a wide knowledge of the law and the world added an imperious temper and a somewhat overbearing will, to which Bethell would never

give way, and thereby earned the gratitude of his less persistent or vigorous professional brethren.

When appearing for a solicitor in a matter arising out of his professional business, Bethell was once or twice interrupted by Knight Bruce with strong observations as to the solicitor's conduct long before the case had been properly opened. Bethell paused and said, 'I deprecate any observations until the case has been fully heard and the proper time for the discharge of judicial duties begins. How must this professional gentleman feel when observations so incautious fall from a high judicial authority!' This rebuke was felt by the public to be well deserved, and was hailed with approval by the legal profession. An advocate as courageous at the present day, if he could find language as apt and judicious, would not fail to meet with the same recognition, for the same faults are rarely lacking in high quarters. Another encounter was described to us by a spectator of the scene. Knight Bruce was restless under what he considered the undue iterations with which Bethell was driving home his point, and at last broke out, 'Mr. Bethell, I have heard you use that argument twice already.' 'Very likely, my lord,' replied Bethell, exaggerating his habitually slow utterance, 'for it is only by the continual dripping of the water on the stone that any impression is created.' His readiness, in fact, was never in fault. When Attorney-General, he had given a very strong opinion in a case submitted to him. When the solicitor handed to him a case in which he had advised years before in a sense directly opposed to the line he was now taking, his only remark was, 'It is a matter of astonishment to me that anyone capable of penning such an opinion should have risen to the eminence I have the honour to enjoy.' Once, when arguing before Lord Campbell, he was stopped by that judge with a request for cases bearing out his contention. 'My lord,' he said, 'such is the law, but as I have to be elsewhere shortly, my friend Mr. Archibald will quote the cases in support of it.' Mr. Archibald not unnaturally left the Court hastily before his leader. Who can picture the situation of the more unhappy junior to whom he suddenly turned, after advancing a proposition which sounded startling, and said, 'Find me a case!' One who acted as his junior in a heavy case records that after stating all the points in their favour he asked him to put anything he thought their opponents might have to say in reply. The junior, who had studied the case carefully, then put the opponent's case in the best

light he could. Bethell seemed to be listening intently, so the junior at length said, 'So you really think they *will* say that?' 'They might say that,' replied Bethell, 'but what d——d fools they would be.' A famous Irish lawyer on one occasion attended a consultation in his chambers previous to an appeal from the Irish Courts to the House of Lords, and discoursed with some volubility on the matter in question. 'Really, Palmer,' said Bethell after a time to the late Lord Selborne, who was also in the case, 'this loquacious savage appears to know some law.' This remark, uttered in the softest voice, and in meditative tones, speedily brought the too talkative junior to a standstill, but whether, as was the case with another junior, he proceeded to 'counter' on his leader's nose History does not relate, though she could hardly disapprove. Another remark of his to a junior too eager to distinguish himself is applicable to all time. 'I think,' said the junior when he had finished and they retired for lunch, 'that you have made a strong impression on the Court.' 'I think so, too,' said Bethell; 'don't disturb it.' An occupant of the Bench vouches for the following characteristic anecdote of Bethell, and his attitude towards his junior. During a lengthy argument he had been repeatedly urged by his junior to take a certain point, which he persisted in regarding as too contemptible to notice. However, after exhausting all his own legal artillery in vain, he at length consented to try his junior's argument as a parting shot. The judge at once took it and gave judgment for Bethell. The latter made no acknowledgment of his junior's superior acuteness, which, whether successful through knowledge of the law, or merely through knowledge of the judge in question, surely deserved some recognition, save to turn round and murmur, 'This silly old man has taken your absurd point.' Irrelevant interruption was hateful to him; he rebuked it once in terms which have become proverbial. Bethell was stating his case at consultation, as he loved to do, with great fulness and accuracy; the solicitor's managing clerk interrupted him twice with corrections as to dates quite immaterial; on the first occasion there was no reply, save a glance and a warning pause; on the second, Bethell said severely, 'Will you be so kind as to go outside the door and shut it?'

Several sayings of his regarding high judicial authorities have been remembered, though not uttered in Court. As to the origin of the Lords Justices he found it in the fact that they were a pair of crutches created so as to enable Lord Truro to walk safely in

Equity as Lord Chancellor, but when he became Chancellor himself he disdained, and perhaps rightly, any such assistance to support his steps. Counsel having asked him that a case might be put down for hearing before 'the full Court,' he replied, 'Mr. A., the case will be put in the Lord Chancellor's list. The court *is* full.' But when at the Bar he on occasion was glad to find a 'full court,' for he thus delivered himself on the subject of the then Chancellor and his 'crutches':—'Lord Chelmsford has absolutely no knowledge of an intricate question like this of Real Property Law. But, as for the Lords Justices, the prurient loquacity of the one and the pertinacious technicality of the other render an appeal to such a tribunal so unsatisfactory that it will be better to go to the full Court.' The personality of the judges in question need not be divulged. One saying of his with regard to the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council has been often quoted, but bears repetition, 'Why do you never sit with us to hear appeals?' said the then Lord Westbury to Sir William Erle. 'Because I am old and deaf and stupid,' was the reply. 'Oh,' said Westbury, 'Chelmsford and I are very old, Napier is very deaf, Colville is very stupid, but we four make an excellent tribunal.' With regard to Lord Cranworth's habit of always sitting with Lords Justices, he said that it was doubtless due to the dislike of all children to being alone in the dark. One of the least pleasant features of his judicial career was his habit of making depreciatory remarks regarding the decisions of his immediate predecessor, Lord Campbell. It is true that Campbell had barred his way to the woolsack and had been appointed to the chancellorship when Bethell might have expected to receive the post as of right, considering his valuable services as Attorney-General, but Campbell might well have been forgiven his brief tenure of the coveted office. Westbury, however, never omitted to make, when possible, some slighting reference to his rival's judgments; but on one occasion it is satisfactory to note that he alluded to a statement of the law as 'valueless and wholly inapplicable,' which turned out to be contained in an argument of his own. We do not remember to have seen many encounters recorded between counsel and himself; his rule was 'parcere subjectis et debellare superbos.' We may note, however, two incidents. In a case arising out of some well-sinking operations, a tedious advocate said, 'My Lord, my client has gone to considerable expense in boring.' 'So I perceive,' said the Chancellor, 'from the number

of counsel employed.' It is also recorded by a witness of the occurrence that Coleridge (afterwards Lord Coleridge) had been addressing a lengthy argument to the House of Lords, containing much literary grace but little law. 'My dear Attorney,' said Westbury, going up to him afterwards, 'you have given us a most charming literary dissertation. Pray come and dine with me to-night and finish it.' His remarks rarely lacked a sting which belied the benevolent aspect of his open countenance. 'His words were smoother than butter,' it has been truly said, 'yet were they very swords.' As Sydney Smith said of another distinguished man, 'the ten commandments were written on his face'; but what are we to think of the following specimen of his irony, and surely it is irony of a high degree, but not very decorously exercised considering the surroundings and the subject. Bethell, then Attorney-General, was invited, in 1859, to address the 'Christian Young Men's Institute' at Wolverhampton, for which place he was at the time M.P. He chose his own career as a shining example of the practical success of Christianity in this world and proceeded in the following strain:—'I would endeavour to point out the great wisdom that has been displayed in denominating this a Christian institution and in conveying thereby the lesson that with Divine knowledge, Divine worship, and the seeking of Divine grace all education is to begin, by endeavouring to point out in how admirable a manner above all religions that ever existed, Christianity is fitted to ensure success in life. We are taught to love our neighbour; the great motive for human action is, therefore, affection, not looking for recompense in return, but pure, simple, mutual love and mutual benevolence. If I were to look back on my own career I should ascribe the greater part of my success not to the possession of any particular ability but, in the great variety of instances, more to the benefit I have found resulting from a feeling in one's favour produced whenever I have been fortunate enough to have it in my power to confer any advantage or kindness on others. I am perfectly confident that the principles of mutual benevolence derived from Christianity, which is the first lesson inculcated when you are taught to read the New Testament, is one of the best and most sure modes of securing *even temporary success* in life. I venture to derive that conclusion from it, because it is peculiarly, and in every sense of the word, a Christian conclusion; and if you compare the lessons of the New Testament with the lessons of any other school of morality

they differ essentially, inasmuch as all Christian goodness is founded wholly and entirely on the principle of love and mutual benevolence. I am extremely glad to find that you have enforced in the whole of your institution and in all its regulations the necessity of making the study of Christianity one of its primary objects.' Surely never was Christianity patronised in a more condescending strain or its practice inculcated by reference to a more incongruous modern instance! It is interesting to note that Mr. H. H. Fowler spoke at this meeting, and was warmly praised by Bethell as a brilliant example of the success of the institution. Evidently he has profited by the exhortation of their distinguished visitor.

Whatever Lord Westbury's views may have been as to the practical benefit to be derived from Christian principles, there can be no doubt that he held the representatives of that branch of the Church by law established in this country in but scant esteem. With the Bench of Bishops in the House of Lords he waged frequent war. It must be owned, however, that in the Bishop of Oxford (Wilberforce) he met his match. We owe it, however, to the diary of that prelate that one or two of his opponent's most characteristic sayings have been handed down to posterity. The Bishop had drawn up a bill enabling clergymen to resign their livings when incapacitated by age and infirmity, and sent a draft of it to Lord Westbury asking for his support, to which the Chancellor replied that he would gladly do so, but he perceived that the Bishop referred to 'diseases of the mind'; this was a difficulty, because, in the first place, there was no such thing as a disease of the mind, and in the second place, he had never met a clergyman, 'with the exception of your lordship,' who had a mind. He is also said to have objected to an Episcopal Resignation Bill as unnecessary, saying that 'the law in its infinite wisdom had already provided for the not improbable event of the imbecility of a bishop.' When he was elevated to the Woolsack, a friend remarked that after the continual jars and turmoil of the Commons, he must feel in Paradise when presiding in the cooler atmosphere of the Lords. 'I might indeed do so,' he replied, 'but for the predominant and excessive display of lawn sleeves, which at once dispels the pleasing illusion.' On one occasion these gibes led to a personal encounter with Wilberforce, conducted with such bitterness on both sides that for a time all relations between the two seem to have been suspended. The occasion was the pro-

nouncement by the Upper House of Convocation of a 'synodical judgment' on the once famous 'Essays and Reviews' as containing 'heretical teachings.' On Lord Houghton asking a question of the Chancellor as to the jurisdiction of Convocation in such matters, Westbury replied in the strain of cold, contemptuous, and cutting sarcasm of which he was so accomplished a master. He pictured the archbishops as having laid themselves open to the penalties of 'Præmunire.' 'As well as the *οἱ πολλοί*, the bishops, deacons, archdeacons, canons—all included in one common crime, all subject to one common penalty.' With regard to the judgment itself he said, 'I am happy to tell your lordships that what is called a synodical judgment is a well-lubricated set of words—a sentence so oily and saponaceous that no one can grasp it. Like an eel it slips through your fingers. It is simply nothing, and I am glad to tell my noble friend that it is literally no sentence at all—*solvuntur risu tabulæ*'; and he went on to warn those who were concerned in such proceedings but objected to them, that their correct course, after protesting, would be 'to gather up their garments and flee, and, remembering the pillar of salt, not to cast a look behind. I am happy to say that in all these proceedings there is more smoke than fire, though they do not probably proceed from a spirit that is equally harmless.' The use of the word 'saponaceous' showed clearly enough at whom this attack was directed, and the Bishop of Oxford promptly countered in no less vigorous a tone. 'If a man has no respect for himself, he ought at all events to respect the tribunal before which he speaks, and when the highest representative of the law of England can think fit to descend to a ribaldry in which he knows that he can safely indulge, because those to whom he addresses it will have too much respect for their character to answer him in like sort, I say the House has grounds to complain.' He afterwards alluded to 'words which blister those upon whom they fall.' Westbury was the first to seek a reconciliation, but no love was ever lost between them; for Mr. Frith in his 'Autobiography' tells us that when he was painting his picture of the 'Marriage of the Prince of Wales' and the Lord Chancellor was sitting to him, 'his eye caught the form of the Bishop of Oxford, and he said, "Ah! I should have thought it impossible to produce a tolerably agreeable face and yet preserve any resemblance to the Bishop of Oxford." And when the Bishop saw my portrait of Westbury, he said, "Like him? Yes; but not wicked enough." If those laugh best who

laugh last, the Bishop certainly had the best of the Chancellor, for he met him at Windsor when he went to hand over the seals on his resignation, and was greeted by Westbury with the somewhat rash quotation, 'Hast thou found me, O mine enemy?' And to the Bishop asking if he remembered the rest of the quotation, he said a lawyer never quoted part of a passage without knowing the whole; but we may doubt with his interlocutor if he really did remember that the passage runs, 'Yea, I have found thee, because thou hast sold thyself to work iniquity.'

Yet the causes of his resignation were less due to deliberate iniquity than to an error in judgment, and party feeling rather than outraged morality dictated the resolutions of the House of Commons. Nothing in his career on the Woolsack became him like the leaving of it, and his farewell address to the House of Lords is a model of dignified and appropriate language; though even this closing scene was not without its touch of satire delivered with an urbanity and courage worthy of his best days. Lord Ebury had brought into the House of Lords a bill to effect certain changes in the burial service, which had been thrown out. The House was greatly moved at the speech of the retiring Chancellor, who, as he was leaving, met Lord Ebury and said to him, 'My lord, you can now read the burial service over me, with any alterations you think proper.'

Strange to say, his death followed within a few hours that of Bishop Wilberforce—'their obols clinked together in Charon's pouch,' as Mr. Traill says in his delightful dialogue between Wilberforce and Westbury in '*The New Lucian*'; but to the world in general he was a personality far less well known than the great churchman, and what was known was his gift for satire and his unsparing use of it. The world did not know of his kindness of heart and indulgence towards his family and intimates, and if it had known, had forgotten his services to the State as a judge, for at his retirement he left no arrears in his list, and had devoted himself for years to the cause of law reform. He will be long remembered as a master in the use of satire, though his wit rarely shone except at the expense of others—generally, it must be confessed, those who deserved the lash. If one were called on to find an epitaph for a career so successful and at the same time in some respects so disappointing, it might be written in the words of Carlyle on Voltaire: 'Clever men are good, but they are not the best.'

Westbury was much more than the ordinary lawyer who succeeds; Sir George Jessel said of him that 'he was a genius who went to the Bar,' but an intellect so brilliant and so highly cultivated should have left the world something better to remember him by than a few caustic epigrams,<sup>1</sup> which were all of particular application. If the Divorce Act is to be looked upon as his monument, his love of the ironical would probably find some food for enjoyment in the embarrassment which its provisions are now causing to the superior clergy.

W. B. DUFFIELD.

<sup>1</sup> One who knew him well writes: 'Other stories and incidents that one remembers depend for their point upon the look of the man, the inimitable expression of profound disgust that he could assume and the mingled sugar and vitriol of his accents, and therefore cannot be adequately expressed in writing.'

## HER BROTHER-IN-LAW.

HE was a French brother-in-law, and a very kind one, at least Mademoiselle Noël said so, and she ought to know, as he was *her* brother-in-law.

We met Mademoiselle Noël in a very correct and very dull little *pension pour dames*, kept by a French widow in Paris. (Of the editorial 'we' in this case, I will only say that it represented a party of English girls studying French and enjoying a very small, limited, and strictly proper '*Wanderjahr*' under the auspices of a maiden aunt.)

We wondered at first what kept Mademoiselle Noël in the dull *pension pour dames*. She had no need to acquire Parisian French, and she seemed to have no other object in life of any kind. She was always ready to do things for other people, because she had nothing to do for herself. She would conduct us to the best shops and do the talking, she would match impossible ribbons, or accompany a sufferer to the dentist, all out of sheer good-nature. People rather imposed upon her after a time, she was so very good-natured. In return she was invited to the afternoon tea-parties which we English gave, after the manner of our kind. She drank the tea and said she liked it, but without enthusiasm.

One day, after a small and very confidential tea-party, she told us why she stayed at the *pension* so long. 'I wish to be married,' said Mademoiselle simply, 'and my brother-in-law is looking out for a suitable *parti* for me.'

At this we looked at Mademoiselle with feminine curiosity, and I fear we decided that she might possibly not secure a high matrimonial prize.

'In my little provincial town there are absolutely no chances,' Mademoiselle pursued, 'so my brother-in-law suggested that I should come to Paris. Thus I am on the spot, near him, if anything presents itself. He found this *pension* for me. You see it is *comme il faut*, quite; and it sounds well if he is asked: "Where is the lady residing?" to reply that I am in so respectable a house, where there are only ladies, you know.' She paused a moment, then added: 'I am thirty-four, and I wish to be settled in life.'

She looked about that age, in fact. She was small and rather delicate-looking, with a faded complexion, small brown eyes and brown hair, out of which the golden glint, which had been its beauty, was beginning to fade. She had an unobtrusive, drooping little figure, and had never been pretty, though no doubt pleasing. She would have been pleasing still, had she been a trifle 'coquette,' as the French say, about her dress. But she was not. She dressed in plain black, and it did not suit her. When the hot weather came on she took to meagre, limp blouses of black cotton with a very small white spot, and these made her look five years older.

'I am still in mourning for my sister,' she explained. 'She died a year ago, and has left two little girls and a boy.'

'Do you—have you—heard of anything, of anybody?' we inquired diffidently.

'Nothing definite as yet,' answered Mademoiselle, shaking her head. 'There was an elderly gentleman who asked for information. My brother-in-law gave him *des renseignements* and arranged an interview. We were, in fact, to have three interviews, the first at an evening reception. We met there. He was *un monsieur très comme il faut* (a little elderly, but very well preserved), his manners good, even distinguished. *Enfin* . . . one is introduced, one makes conversation, one is invited to take an ice . . . It all passed off very agreeably. The second interview was to be at a picture gallery. I went, and I stayed more than an hour (in any case I saw the pictures), but he did not come. It rained that day, perhaps that was the reason, who knows? *Enfin!* As for the third interview, I don't even remember where it was to be, I did not go myself, after all. And neither, it appears, did he. So nothing comes of it.' She spoke absolutely without emotion, just as one might speak of taking a situation, and, in fact, it *was* a case of taking a situation.

We took a lively interest henceforth in Mademoiselle. One evening, when she went to a ball with the *beau-frère*, the whole *pension*, to a woman, superintended her toilette, and we were as anxious for her to look well as if she had been our own daughter. There was something thrilling in the thought of what arrangements the brother-in-law might have made for that ball. A casual fate, a chance meeting, did not seem half so wonderful, after all, as this—predestination. Mademoiselle looked very well that evening in a white dress with black ribbons. She was prettier and younger in evening dress. We hoped great things.

Next morning we were early awake with feverish excitement to know what combination had taken place. We carried little Mademoiselle off to a corner and made discreet inquiries, at which she laughed and blushed as much as if she had had a real natural offer, not a forced one.

‘An impossible gentleman,’ she said, shrugging her shoulders. ‘To begin with, much too young for me—and then, I fancy, a little stupid. My brother-in-law said he would inquire about the mental condition of his family, but I told him not to trouble. *Ça ne vaut pas la peine.* It is impossible in any case. *Donc? Rien!*’

The summer wore on and Paris grew hot and dusty. We longed for a *dénouement* for Mademoiselle, but none came. She grew more drooping and even became depressed. Poor little would-be bride! We tried to cheer her, and she enjoyed our little festivities. She could be merry too, although she had absolutely no sense of humour.

‘I shouldn’t mind being an old maid in England,’ she said one evening, as we sat out in the little garden and it grew dark and cool. ‘With you it is different, there are so many single ladies in England, and you are not despised, you enjoy life. But to be despised . . . and to have no object in life, it is dreadful! ’

‘Couldn’t you do something, take an interest in something?’ we suggested.

‘I have such a small income,’ said Mademoiselle. ‘I cannot afford to move about, to travel, for instance. And I am not clever at music, or painting, or books—and I don’t care for such things. Once I used to draw very well indeed, but I gave it up—that was when I nursed my parents through their long illnesses. I gave everything up then. . . . No, what I should like, and what is necessary to make me happy, that would be *la vie de famille*—to have a house of my own, perhaps children, and also a husband. That is what is necessary for my happiness.’ She said it wistfully, without the least trace of self-consciousness.

‘I feel I was destined for the *vie de famille*,’ Mademoiselle told us so often, that we felt a *vie de famille* ought to be procured for her at any cost and without delay. She was so gentle and unassuming that we grew quite fond of her. Why had she not married long ago?

‘*Mais!* my sister was the elder, she was pretty, and she had a larger *dot* than I. And then I had to nurse my parents through

long illnesses. That is how I find myself alone now, an orphan, and with such a small income that I can scarcely live on it.'

We felt so sorry for Mademoiselle, and said good-bye to her regretfully when we left Paris. The last we saw of her, she was waving her handkerchief to us from the balcony of the little *pension pour dames*. Everyone else was leaving Paris on account of the heat, but Mademoiselle's limited means kept her there through the stifling summer.

Six months later my sister and I were at home in England. We received one morning a grand document announcing the marriage of our Mademoiselle Noël to some gentleman, a widower. A long letter from Mademoiselle accompanied this document.

'Now, how did she meet him?' said my sister breathlessly. 'Is he very old? And is she at all—the least bit in love with him? and—' we devoured the letter breathlessly.

'Why!—of course! Why did we never think of it before? The only solution! So simple!' we both exclaimed as one woman, reading the letter together in wild excitement.

'So natural! Of course—she *had* to marry the brother-in-law!'

For Mademoiselle's letter announced that her brother-in-law had decided to marry her himself, and she was so very happy at the thought, and besides, there were her sister's dear children to bring up, so that the *vie de famille* could begin immediately.

We wrote a congratulatory letter at once, joyously, exuberantly. We said how natural it was that she should bring up her sister's children, how beautifully it all fitted in. The problem was solved—like the egg of Columbus—in the simplest way in the world. And we rushed out to buy a wedding present, which was sent off at once.

And only when this excitement was over, and as we sat down to talk about it calmly and read Mademoiselle's letter again—only then did something strike us simultaneously, like a lightning flash. We looked at each other, and both exclaimed at the same moment blankly (for we were the daughters of a clergyman, and papa had very strict views), 'Why, she was a deceased wife's sister!!'

MARY HARGRAVE.

## PAGES FROM A PRIVATE DIARY.

*August 1st.*—I am not happy. The cause of my unhappiness is nothing very great, but, on the contrary, something very small indeed; so small that it might be deemed below the dignity of a journal were I not able to record it in classical phrase. ‘There is an insect with us, especially in chalky districts, which is very troublesome and teasing all the latter end of the summer, getting into people’s skins and raising tumours, which itch intolerably. This animal (which is called a harvest-bug) is very minute, scarce discernible to the naked eye, of a bright scarlet colour, and of the genus of *acarus*.’ (White’s ‘Selborne,’ Letter 35.) Everybody has his pet specific; in past years I have employed the oil of cajeput; but the success is indifferent, and the aura one moves in undeniably pungent. My wife has endeavoured to convince me that I should resent it in my neighbours.

*2nd.*—It is no longer the fashion to relate one’s dreams at breakfast, but last night’s dream, as much as I can remember of it, is worth recording. It was an episode in a police case. I was in a well-lighted train half asleep when another train flared by and roused me. Looking in its direction I saw reflected in the windows of the passing carriages a scuffle, gagging, and robbery that was being transacted in the next compartment to mine; and at the end of the journey I identified the criminal. I do not remember that this possibility has been used by any writer of detective fiction. The idea is of no use to me whatever, and I should be glad to exchange it for something more serviceable. Why does not that up-to-date Providence, the editor of the ‘Review of Reviews,’ establish some dépôt for illegitimate babies of the imagination? My more usual dreams are dialogues. It seems an extraordinary thing that one should be able to converse with oneself and enjoy all the excitement of expectation as to what is to come next. I ask a searching question or deliver what seems a crushing retort, and wait anxiously for the reply just as if the interlocutor were another person. But probably this is the ordinary experience of the novelist or dramatist—the sort with imagination, I mean; only they see visions while I but dream dreams. At least, I know whenever I meet —, he is sure to

say, 'Isn't that a magnificent thing so-and-so says in my new piece? it is so like him'; whereas his natural modesty would prevent his calling attention to his own good things. I have always regretted that the ingenious author of 'Happy Thoughts' got so little way with his 'Handbook of Repartee'; it would have been invaluable to me in waking hours when my wit is always *l'esprit de l'escalier*. But failing this, it would be useful to have an historical handbook—not 'what to say to an Abbé or Fakir,' but what actually has been said in the way of repartee to or by distinguished Fakirs and Abbés. The book would naturally begin with the best things of the Abbé de Talleyrand. Not the least interesting pages would be those devoted to Bus-drivers and Policemen; for the wit in these cases is sometimes as subtle as in the more polished examples, and I heartily sympathise with Burton, author of the 'Anatomy of Melancholy,' whose one amusement was listening to the wit encounters of Oxford bargees. The other day I overheard the following:—

*A.* Does your mother take in washing?

*B.* Yes, and she ain't particular to having a gentleman-lodger, but he must know how to behave hisself *like* a gentleman, yer know.

I thought this excellent in several respects; it did not take umbrage at the suggestion of the laundry, but accepted it and went even further into biographical particulars, and then produced the sting, where the sting ought to be, in the tail. As some help to the future author of the Handbook, I note that one useful form of repartee depends upon Paronomasia, another upon looking closely at Metaphors, a third upon Quotation. A good example of the first is the reply of Sir Robert Walpole to Sarah, Duchess of Marlborough, who was indignant at being offered the revived Order of the Bath, and would take nothing but the Garter: 'Madam, the Bath must come before the Garter.'<sup>1</sup> Of the second, this is the best instance that occurs to me at the moment:—

RITUALIST. At least you will own that Art is the handmaid of Religion?

PROTESTANT. Yes, and I wish Religion would give her a month's notice.

The third I will illustrate from the same witty scholar, whose praise is in the University. An Ibsenite was running down Shakespeare and saying his characters were not 'alive.' To which my friend replied: 'O, yes, they're *alive*, but not *kicking*; cer-

<sup>1</sup> This story proves incidentally that washing did not, like Christmas Trees and Crystal Palaces, come in with the late Prince Consort.

tainly not *kicking*.' In many cases a repartee is helped by a stammer. Of this use Charles Lamb is the classical example, but my Oxford friend runs him hard.

4th.—Sophia's health requires at least a fortnight by the sea every year. My temperament, on the other hand, is so bilious, that moorland air suits me better; but being so far from *fin-de-siècle* as to enjoy each other's society, we practise in turn a little old-fashioned stoicism about our climate. And I happen to have a few friends at Ulubrae. To-day the ladies set off by train, and I on my bicycle. I ran first to Farnham, so as to spend a few hours at the Volunteer Manoeuvres. The hops in the neighbourhood looked well. Some were shown me that had grown in the same field for three hundred years, but it will soon not pay to grow them. After tea I resumed my journey, and joined the Portsmouth road at Petersfield. I noticed on the way that Wolmer Pond was nearly dry. In such a drought a hundred and fifty years ago search was made in the bed, and there was a great find of Roman coins. It might be worth while to try again. About two miles after leaving Petersfield I had a most disagreeable experience, 'like a phantasma or a waking dream,' which is much worse than a nightmare. I had run down a hill and was pedalling along the bottom, when the wheels seemed possessed with a spirit of opposition, and would not work. I got down to examine them and could find nothing amiss; they revolved in the air quite smoothly; but when I mounted again the same thing happened, and it was only with great exertion that I could move a yard. Again I alighted, and fortunately happened to look over my shoulder, when I discovered that I had been climbing a steep hill. The blinding whiteness of the road had altogether masked the incline. Poor Clough would have moralised this into a very pretty poem.

Who Duty's bicycle doth pedal,  
Where white the long road stretches still,  
Till ankles scarce can turn the treadle—  
Look backward; you have climbed a hill!

Purists who do not wheel say *bicycle*; but the vowel in Greek is short, and why should the language lose a possible rhyme to 'icicle'?

5th.—I strolled after breakfast to see who of my old acquaintance might be here. For a time the pageant of bright faces was singularly attractive; then I longed for someone to chat with or, at least, nod to—apothecary, plough-boy, thief. I mused with

Bacon, 'Little do men perceive what solitude is and how far it extendeth ; for a crowd is not company, and faces are but a gallery of pictures.' Which meant that my liver was beginning to show its distaste for the seaside ; luckily I soon met Colonel —, and in talk over old times forgot my melancholy. The roads were all crowded with bicycles, and their smoothness justifies the exercise. Ladies outnumber men and are more dangerous to pedestrians, being too careless in turning corners without ringing their bells. It seems the fashion to read as one wheels. Some enterprising publisher should start a Bicycle Library, on light paper with big type. So far I have escaped injury, but Bob, the fox-terrier, was run over this morning. No doubt he was a good deal to blame. This is his first visit to a town, and he has been trying to maintain the country etiquette of speaking to every dog he meets—which is dangerous among so many vehicles. There is a grand parade of bicyclists before dinner, when the skilful exhibit their tricks. Some enthusiasts appear again in the evening. And certainly the gliding motion of so many lamps, the noiseless noise of the machines, and the half-seen passage of ambling nymphs and carousing cavaliers has a very pleasing effect.

6th.—Li Hung Chang (if one may still call him so) paid us a visit yesterday, and we gave him an ambassador's salute of nineteen guns as he steamed into the Solent on his way to Osborne. He had a fine view of the Channel Squadron, and to-day was taken round the dockyard. The Mayor, one hears, was astonished by his searching questions about municipal politics, mode of election, salaries, &c. What effect is being made on the Viceroy's mind by this visit to the West ? Probably he is confirmed in his faith in machinery, and in Western barbarians as the best makers of machinery, and that is all. All his life he has fought for railroads, mines, and gunboats, and no doubt his credit since the war will suffice for some large orders. But when the guns and rails arrive ? There has been for twenty years a torpedo college at Tientsin, with absolutely no result in the recent sea-fights. The simple fact is that Li is a political Nicodemus, lacking the humility to enter Western civilisation by the door ; and Nicodemus is useless as a prophet.

7th.—A correspondent is good enough to inform me that the story I entered in my journal on July 2 about the groom's confusion between playing and visiting cards was told him at Constantinople in 1847 by a Turk whom he met at table in the

Hôtel de l'Europe, but he told it of a lady. The Turk proved to be a certain Seyd Ali, well known at that date as an interpreter, in which capacity he served in Colonel Chesney's Euphrates Expedition. The tale is probably told in every society which uses both sorts of cards, and speaks of them as 'cards' without a qualifying epithet.

11th.—It is astonishing that the Admiralty do not take more pains to interest our inland villages in seafaring. Only one boy has in my recollection gone from us for a sailor, and he did not get further than Portsmouth, being obliged to return as he had no certificate of good conduct. He was one of Tom's under-gardeners and had a soul above cabbages. So the next time vegetables irked him he went to Reading, and took his shilling in the ordinary way. He was much above the average yokel in intelligence—I fancy he had a dash of gipsy-blood in him—and is now a clarionet player in the band. Cheap excursions will do much good in breaking down the old horror of the sea. I remember a sick boy of my old gardener's being sent to a Convalescent Home, and charged by his mother on no account to go near the water. After his first day he wrote home a post-card, which his mother showed me in fear and trembling; this was its audacious message: 'There is nothing to be afraid of, it comes up like a snail.'

13th.—Every soldier must have been refreshed by Captain Bethell's speech in the House last night. 'He often asked himself whether the overwhelming dread that seemed to pervade the public mind [Query, the Governmental mind] with regard to a great European war might not tend to make the country somewhat fainthearted in upholding the great traditions of the English nation.' Certainly, in private life, if one was to hesitate before dealing with a bully till one had calculated all the consequences of his resentment, and the chances of interference from passers-by, people might go near to calling one a coward. And experience proves that 'the consequences' do not happen to a man who is brave upon instinct. Captain Bethell's speech was in everybody's mouth at the club this morning. Old — buttonholed me, and, between pinches of snuff and taps on the box, gave me his views on the Eastern Question, which as being in a manner typical I make a note of. 'No one who has seen fighting is likely to underestimate the horrors of war. But it is a new thing in Tory politics to say "D—d sorry; so and so's cruelty is revolting; but to stop him would mean war." Well, and suppose it did! But it

wouldn't, no such luck! Nobody would fight if they saw we meant business, but while those fellows like Dilke go about saying how weak we are, we get demoralised, and want to ask all kinds of questions before we dare bite our thumbs. It is a plaguey nuisance of Russia to be so — selfish; it was all selfishness in them to want to interfere in '53 and again in '79, but we stopped that little game, and now they play dog in the manger when we want to civilise a bit.' It is a pity, certainly, that Russians have vindictive memories; it is also inconceivably vexatious of them to take up our discarded rôle of protector of the Porte, and refuse to see any difference between their interested interference and our philanthropy. But might we not all now cry quits and push our memories back a little further, say to Navarino, and show the Turk once more a solid European alliance? Would it be so very irreligious if we in England left off swearing by St. Jingo and left his discredited shrine to the moles and bats? Why is it perfectly just and fair for us to steal Egypt, while Russia may not even look over the wall at Constantinople? It is a comfort to find some of the saner newspapers losing their Russophobia, and it is still more reassuring that Lord Salisbury does not inherit Beaconsfield's high opinion of the Turk as the 'bulwark against barbarism.' There seems an impression abroad, probably arising from the Czar's expected visit to Balmoral, that an understanding between Russia and England is being arrived at; and the *Chronicle*, being irresponsible, has announced it for a fact. But the Russian papers seem still very hostile.

14th.—Whenever there is likely to be work with the House of Lords, I read the *Daily Chronicle*, as in old days we used to read the *Star*—'for sweetness and charity,' as Matthew Arnold said. It has hardly been up to its best vituperative form over the Irish Land Bill. 'Splendid fatuity,' and 'unutterable farce' are not epoch-making phrases; they lack discrimination; and 'three ridiculous old gentlemen,' as the description of a quorum, is unworthy even of the *Star* of to-day. Possibly the editor of the *Chronicle* has discovered the elixir, and secured perpetual youth; but even so, 'old' is ungracious; and why 'ridiculous'? So many peers in the present House have been made and not born, that their intellect and manners are probably yet pretty much those of commoners. But it takes indignation to make satire, and though a landlord is an evil beast enough (while a 'proprietor'—subtle distinction—is an angel), none but a spiritual peer can

rouse the *Chronicle* to a really fine frenzy. I have never forgotten a sentence that closed the story of the rejection of the Home Rule Bill. 'Thus the Bishops completed the work which their ancestors, the Scribes and Pharisees, began eighteen hundred years ago.' I have often thought that this sentence had something to do with the Radical collapse at the polls. Of course the *Chronicle* is not without virtues, not the least being its enterprise; and I have been shown once or twice a piece of literary criticism that it would be hard to overpraise.

15th.—The news that to-day is Hospital Saturday in Southsea was broken to us at breakfast by the maid bringing in a collecting box.

The veins unfill'd, our blood is cold, and then  
We pour upon the morning, are unapt  
To give.

However, we had plenty of opportunity, when our souls were suppler, to amend our beneficence. The streets were crowded with young women dressed like nurses and wearing a red-cross, who smiled and smiled, and pushed a box into one's waistcoat. For a time I smiled and put them by; but at last was driven to my bicycle. Even then they lay waiting at the thievish corners of the streets, and bade one stand and deliver. The young men seemed to like it, but my seat is perhaps not so good as theirs, and I took to a country road. I see one of the papers has an apposite article on bazaars and other church leeches, on the whole condemning them. They seem to me as justifiable as the smiles of these engaging damsels. Both are an attempt to divert by cajolery certain sums from the milliner and cigar merchant to the sick and needy. Good churchmen, of course, tithe their incomes for charity, but there are churchmen and church-women who do not, and it is for these that bazaars exist. In old days such were dealt with firmly by the priest at the deathbed; if we substitute the love of pleasure for the fear of pain, we employ no higher, but certainly no lower, motive. It does not seem in any sense fair to class bazaars with gambling hells; there is no question of doing evil that good may come; it is a fact that Flavia,<sup>1</sup> now as much as a century ago, requires some

<sup>1</sup> The Editor thinks some of the present generation may need telling who Flavia is. 'If anyone asks Flavia to do something in charity, if she likes the person who makes the proposal, or happens to be in a right *temper*, she will toss him *half-a-crown* or a crown, and tell him if he knew what a *long Milliner's bill* she had just received, he would think it a great deal for her to give.' (Law's *Serious Call*, p. 96; but see the whole witty description of this modish lady.)

stronger stimulus than pure benevolence before she will put her silver penny in the alms-dish, and the fact must be taken account of. Goldsmith tells a capital story of the method Beau Nash employed to extort a subscription from a reluctant duchess for the hospital at Bath :—

“ The sums he gave, and collected for the hospital, were great, and his manner of doing it was no less admirable. I am told that he was once collecting money in *Wiltshire's* room for that purpose, when a lady entered who is more remarkable for her wit than her charity, and not being able to pass by him unobserved, she gave him a pat with her fan, and said, *You must put down a trifle for me, Nash, for I have no money in my pocket.* Yes, madam, says he, that I will, with pleasure, if your grace will tell me when to stop : then taking a handful of guineas out of his pocket, he began to tell them into his white hat, one, two, three, four, five. *Hold, hold,* says the dutchess, *consider what you are about.* Consider your rank and fortune, madam, says *Nash*, and continued telling, six, seven, eight, nine, ten. Here the dutchess called again, and seemed angry. Pray compose yourself, madam, cried *Nash*, and don't interrupt the work of charity ; eleven, twelve, thirteen, fourteen, fifteen. Here the dutchess stormed and caught hold of his hand. Peace, madam, says *Nash* ; you shall have your name written in letters of gold, *madam*, and upon the front of the building, *madam*. Sixteen, seventeen, eighteen, nineteen, twenty. *I won't pay a farthing more,* says the dutchess. Charity hides a multitude of sins, replies *Nash*. Twenty-one, twenty-two, twenty-three, twenty-four, twenty-five. *Nash*, says she, *I protest you frighten me out of my wits, L—d, I shall die!* Madam, you will never die with doing good ; and if you do, it will be the better for you, answered *Nash*, and was about to proceed ; but perceiving her grace had lost all patience, a parley ensued, when he, after much altercation, agreed to stop his hand, and compound with her grace for thirty guineas. The dutchess, however, seemed displeased the whole evening ; and when he came to the table where she was playing, bid him *stand farther, an ugly devil, for she hated the sight of him.* But her grace afterwards, having a run of good luck, called *Nash* to her. *Come,* says she, *I will be friends with you, though you are a fool; and to let you see I am not angry, there is ten guineas more for your charity.* But this *I insist on, that neither my*

*name, nor the sum, shall be mentioned.'* ('Life of Richard Nash, Esq.,' p. 121.)

18th.—It would be an astonishing thing, but for the known laziness of human nature, that parents should allow their children to attend revivalistic meetings on the beach at sea-side places. The religion of children should be simple and home-made, enthusiastic, if you please, but breezy and full of ozone ; the reverse of morbid. Now the spiritual methods of these beach-combers are about as healthy as their physical methods. They collect a vast array of children together, and seat them cheek by jowl, dirty by clean, on a hot August day, in circles of an inferno, with a double row of nurses behind to keep out any stray whiffs of fresh air ; and then instead of telling them, as our Catechism does, that they are Christians and should behave themselves as such, they call them sinners, who will probably die young, and then—the preacher will not answer for the consequences. In some cases, too, that I know of, the preacher has told children to come against their parents' wishes ; a pretty religion, surely, that begins with the breach of the first ethical commandment. Parents that I have remonstrated with for allowing their children to attend these services defend themselves by saying that it *may* do the children good ;<sup>1</sup> a plea that shows the importance of the Johnsonian precept to free one's *mind* from cant.

19th.—My term of patience at the sea having reached its period, we have come for a few days' visit to the B——'s, near Guildford, to fill the interval before we are expected at P——'s place in Norfolk. I took train to Petersfield, as it seemed unnecessary to labour up the south slope of the downs, and then followed the Portsmouth Road through Liphook, &c. The heather was in brilliant beauty, and a Scotsman whom I boarded on the road confessed that it put him in mind of his own country. I vowed that should I ever become a potentate, I would be 'Sowdan of Surrye.' My friendly Scot, by his pleasant society, more than

<sup>1</sup> This phrase suggests the story of the Bishop's lady who kept a box of tracts in her hall with the inscription, 'Please take one, it *can* do you no harm and *may* do you good.' Some wag at a garden party transferred the ticket to a favourite damson tree. Tales that are still told of Bishops' ladies in Cathedral closes make one wonder if they ever heard of Mrs. Proudie. I know one small Cathedral close set round with lily and red rose where the Bishop's lady, new come to the diocese, makes a point of arriving at the parties given in her honour three minutes before they break up. I know another—but the story is too long for a footnote.

halved the toil of climbing Hindhead. He pointed out the objects of interest on the road, such as the 'Seven Thorns' Inn, telling me how the landlord resented Mrs. Oliphant's use of it in the 'Cuckoo in the Nest.' When we reached the top he showed me all the counties of England, and the glory of them. The run from Hindhead down to Godalming will remain long in memory. The road was perfect; it was about mid-day, and exceedingly hot; but the rapid motion made a breeze, which seemed to insulate me from the flames. There was no one else on the road for the seven miles of descent; and this was perhaps as well, for my spirits were so much raised that I could not help shouting. I thought of Elijah going to heaven in a chariot of fire, and extinguished a scruple about the downward direction by a vague reference to Antipodes. Every now and then the wind brought a hot whiff of the bramble. In the valley there was shade once more, and the aromatic smell of firs; but what ointment is not spoiled by flies? I was so much cheered by the journey that I conceived a tenderness for any bicyclists I met, and would have accosted them had they not looked strangely on me. There should be (perhaps there is) some formal salutation for the road, or better several, one for meeting on a level, one of encouragement to the bicyclist going up hill, one of congratulation to the fortunate brother going down.

21st.—Was Mr. Watts present at Millais' funeral? The *Daily —*, in one column, tells me that 'conspicuous among those, &c., was the venerable form, &c.', and in another that 'in accordance with his habitual practice, Mr. Watts did not attend the ceremony.' It must be very difficult for an editor to maintain consistency among so many picturesque writers. I remember at the end of the Ashanti war that the same paper honoured Prince Henry as a patriot who gave his life for his country, and applauded the withholding of rewards from the survivors, who no less had to face the dangerous climate. 'It would be a remarkable arrow that should pick out only the brave,' said the Spartan prisoner in Thucydides; so these gentlemen attributed too much discrimination to the malaria.

25th.—The papers report that the Pope has included Zola's 'Rome' in the *Index Expurgatorius*. Was it not Pio Nono who, being asked by an author to do something for a book of his, after long reflection, replied, "I will tell you what I can do; I can put it on the Index"?

26th.—I have been reading Orme's History again, i.e. for the

tenth time. Though I did not find a will in it, I found as many excellent things as ever. Surely no man ever had a style better adapted for the clear straightforward narration of great events played on a great and gorgeous stage. His account of the Black Hole of Calcutta is a miracle of compression, and is untainted by any approach to rhetorical ornament. Yet Orme wrote when men loved ornament, and the subject invited it. Here is a portion of the description :—

‘All regards of compassion and affection were lost, and no one would recede or give way for the relief of another. Faintness sometimes gave short pauses of quiet, but the first motion of any one renewed the struggle through all, under which ever and anon some one sunk to rise no more. At two o’clock not more than fifty remained alive. But even this number were too many to partake of the saving air, the contest for which and life, continued until the morn, long implored, began to break; and, with the hope of relief, gave the few survivors a view of the dead.’ When at last the door was opened, an ordinary writer would have condemned us to half a page of horrors and tears. Not so Orme. He merely notes that out of the one hundred and forty-six who went in no more than twenty-three came out alive—‘the ghastliest forms that ever were seen alive.’ That this reticence is not mere accident but is ‘the perfection of an inestimable art’ is shown by the careful choice of words and by the whole tone of the history. The phrases which follow what I have just quoted are full of a noble artifice. ‘The Nabob’s troops beheld them, and the havoc of death from which they had escaped, with indifference.’ I wish our modern travellers, historians, and geographers would learn to write like Orme. His view of the Province of Bengal is a mode of geographical description. There is a certainty of touch which is quite delightful in such phrases as ‘the Ganges from its irruption through the mountains of the frontier flows for 300 miles to the south-east, when it receives the Jumna at Allahabad.’ But I must not transcribe the whole of ‘The Military Transactions of the British Nation in Indostan.’ As Sophia says, I am not safe when I get on Orme.

## CLARISSA FURIOSA.

BY W. E. NORRIS.

## CHAPTER XXXVII.

## THE TOUAREGS.

RAOUL, who had brought no servant to Africa with him, engaged a private of the native *tirailleurs* to serve him in that capacity. This gigantic negro, Salem by name, was a Mahomedan from the Soudan. He was without credentials ; but then, as Colonel Davillier remarked, there was not a man under his command who was likely to possess any credentials worth speaking of, and Salem, if not precisely an accomplished valet, seemed to be a good-natured creature. Raoul took a fancy to him because he grinned from ear to ear upon the smallest provocation, because he was said to have fought like a demon upon previous occasions, and because he kept his person scrupulously clean. Salem, on his side, conceived a prompt and profound affection for his new master, who, instead of hitting him over the head for negligence or stupidity, merely pointed out to him with grave kindness what his duties were, and whom he loudly proclaimed to be '*bon comme un gâteau*'.

Like all negroes, Salem was loquacious, and at odd times Raoul learnt a good deal from him about the nature of the fighting which awaited them both. He did not take a very rosy view of their prospects. If it was to be only a question of chastising certain black tribes and then returning as quickly as possible to St. Louis, well and good : that might be done ; although there were more rifles and ammunition in the interior than ought to have been allowed to penetrate so far. But if they were to proceed northwards into the desert, without adequate transport and without means of communication with their base, that would be quite another affair. The Touaregs, those terrible veiled horsemen of the Sahara, who seldom risked a pitched battle and whose whereabouts it was impossible to ascertain at any given moment,

<sup>1</sup> Copyright in the United States of America, 1896, by W. E. Norris.

were capable of giving unpleasant surprises to the most skilful European commander.

*'Bien méchants ces gens-là, et bons guerriers, va ! Toi n'as pas besoin de les chercher, les Touareg—mieux vaut rester chez toi !'*

Raoul did not quite gather whether this advice was addressed to him personally or to the French nation in general ; nor did he feel altogether sure of Salem, who seemed to view the possible discomfiture of the whites with a touch of exultation. However, he remarked that, so far as he was concerned, all he had to do was to obey orders, and his retainer agreed with him that such was the whole duty of a soldier.

*'Moi, j'aurai soin de toi,'* he added encouragingly ; *'si tu ramasses la mort, c'est que moi n'y serai plus.'*

The man himself was obviously not afraid of death ; that is one advantage of having an easily comprehended creed and being absolutely convinced of its truth. He had seen a good deal of service and had been badly wounded more than once ; he chattered about his feats of arms—not indeed without some admixture of bombast, yet with a childlike simplicity which rendered it easy to guess when he was lying and when he was not. It took a good deal to kill him, he observed complacently, and in truth his magnificent physique lent confirmation to the boast.

But it would not take a great deal—it would not even take a Touareg, perhaps—to kill a young European whose health had never been of the best and who had no sufficient motive for struggling against the maladies of a fever-stricken region. Raoul, fully realising this, and impressed not only by the discouraging hints of Salem but by the despondent shakes of the head in which Colonel Davillier frequently indulged, ended by regarding his death as a foregone conclusion, and asking himself whether he had made all the arrangements which a man ought to make under such circumstances. As a matter of fact, he had not made them ; but he thought that he had. What would be the use of his leaving a will ? There was nobody in the world who would care to possess his few personal belongings, and as for the property, that must of course go, in any case, to a cousin of his whom he had never seen. Oddly enough, it did not occur to him to despoil that unknown person, or those unknown persons—for probably there were several amongst whom a division would have to be made—in favour of those who were no blood-relations of the

de Malglaives. He had been brought up to look upon the claims of the family as sacred, and he did not even remember how great a boon he had it in his power to confer upon poor Lady Luttrell by bequeathing the Château de Grancy to her. Had he thought of this, he would have executed a testament forthwith; but he himself had never been poor, and he had clean forgotten the incidents of his last interview with Madeline's mother.

What, of course, he did not forget was his last interview with Madeline, and what he, naturally enough, desired was that he should not be too speedily forgotten by her. She did not love him—that, no doubt, must be regarded as conclusive, and he had proved that he so regarded it by coming out to Sénégal to die. Still she had promised that she would try to think less harshly of him for the future, and there could be no great harm in his writing a few pages to her which she would never read until he should have passed beyond reach of pardon or condemnation.

So, one hot, airless night, when sleep was out of the question, notwithstanding all the fatigues of the day, he sat down and penned a missive which was destined to cause more suffering than he contemplated or wished. He did not, indeed, imagine that it would cause any suffering at all: he only wanted Madeline to know the whole truth; and, somehow or other, there was less difficulty about making the truth apparent to her by a letter, written practically upon his death-bed, than there had been by word of mouth.

'Now that it is all over,' he wrote, 'and that no fancies of mine can offend you or help me, I please myself by imagining that you might have cared for me, if I had not led the sort of life which you so often gave me to understand that you could not forgive. You were, perhaps, right, and it is certainly true that I have a past behind me of which I have no reason to be proud. Yet I think you make a mistake in supposing that a man's future must resemble his past, and I can swear that you made a very great mistake when you said that my love had been given to other women as well as to you. These few lines will not reach you until I am dead; so you will believe that I could have no motive for telling you a lie. I have never loved any woman but you, and since that day at Lourdes—do you remember, I wonder, that we sat for a time on the bank of the Gave and that you dropped a flower, which I ventured to pick up?—since that day I have never made the faintest pretence of doing so. It seems to

me that a man ought not to be judged too severely for having done as other men do, provided that he repents and amends his conduct. Is not that, after all, the teaching of the religion which you profess ?

‘ But this, you will say, is not very much to the point, seeing that you would not have loved me even if I had had nothing to repent of. I acknowledge it ; yet you will not grudge a dying man the fancies which I mentioned just now, and you will understand my longing to be—I will not say respected, but at least pitied and absolved by you. If I were a good Catholic, I should send for a priest when I felt my last hour approaching, should I not ? Well, not being a good Catholic, it is to you, mademoiselle, that I turn with my plea for absolution. If there is a life beyond the grave—but, although there may be such a life for some people, I feel almost sure that there can be none for me—my love for you will remain hereafter what it has been here. Otherwise I should assuredly cease to be myself. I do not wish to think about the remainder of your life in this world—I know what must happen, and I cannot pretend to be entirely resigned. But what I can say with sincerity and truth is that my last thought will be of you, mademoiselle, and that my last wish will be for your happiness.’

On the following evening Raoul dined with the Governor, who had invited him, Colonel Davillier and one or two others to partake of the last meal which they were likely to eat under civilised conditions for some time to come. The Governor was, or affected to be, sanguine of the success and the speedy return of the expedition : perhaps he thought that the least he could do for his guests was to assume a cheerful countenance.

‘ Your fashion of serving our country is a more enviable one than mine, messieurs,’ said he. ‘ You are going to make your little war at the best season of the year ; you have some hope of excitement before you and some hope of being back in France before the summer ; whereas I must sit still in this terrible place, with nothing to do but to write despatches which nobody will read and receive instructions which nobody could carry out. All I beg of you is not to ruin my chances of promotion by failing to discover the enemy ! ’

‘ Oh, we shall discover the enemy—or he will discover us,’ answered Colonel Davillier rather grimly ; ‘ there is no need to be disquieted on that score.’

‘ *Allons !* you ask for nothing better, I imagine. As for

M. de Malglaive, who has already been performing prodigies, I am told, I shall look forward to making honourable mention of him in my report of your victory.'

The Governor was extremely kind and friendly to Raoul, who, after dinner was over, took an opportunity of confiding to his care an envelope addressed to M. Cayaux at Pau. This contained the letter which M. Cayaux was requested to be so good as to deliver to Miss Luttrell ; it might have given rise to gossip which would have caused annoyance to Miss Luttrell had her name been submitted to the scrutiny and curiosity of a colonial official.

'One is not precisely certain, M. le Gouverneur,' Raoul explained, 'that one will have the honour of seeing you again. Might I beg you, in the event of anything happening to me, to forward this letter to my man of business ? It is rather important that in that event—but not otherwise—it should reach his hands.'

'Count upon me,' the Governor replied. 'But I hope and believe that it will soon be my duty to give this document back to you, instead of despatching it to its destination.'

Raoul, for his part, felt that it would be almost ridiculous of him to escape from the perils which he had courted, and which, by all accounts, were quite ready to give him a welcome. To come safe and sound out of an affair to which hardened old soldiers like Colonel Davillier could not allude without significant grimaces would have something of the effect of an anti-climax. Yet so strong is the animal clinging to life which infects us all that there were moments when he could not help shuddering at the thought of what awaited him. When once the bustle and confusion of embarkation were at an end (for the troops were to proceed up the Sénegal river as far as boats could take them) he had nothing to do but to lie on deck beneath an awning and listen to the unending chatter of Salem, who regaled him with gruesome descriptions of the tortures inflicted by his fellow-countrymen upon those who were so unlucky as to fall into their hands alive. As for the Pagan tribes whom it was the ostensible object of the mission to chastise, they would make no very formidable stand, Salem thought ; it was on the northward march across the desert that trouble might be anticipated, and Raoul perceived that his servant was anxious to discover what had not yet been revealed—namely, how far towards the north the force under Colonel Davillier's command had been ordered to make its way.

He was less in danger of committing himself to indiscreet

revelations because his chief had not been particularly communicative with him. There was, he knew, some idea of joining hands with another body of French troops, which was believed to be advancing up the Niger ; it was possible that, if all went well, Timbuctoo might be reached and occupied ; but it was much more probable that a hasty and inglorious retreat would be the result of operations which, as Colonel Davillier often grumbled, were not being undertaken seriously.

‘*Allons nous faire casser les reins !*’ he was wont to say, quoting a valiant and unfortunate commander, who, as all the world knows, had been ordered nearly a quarter of a century before to achieve the impracticable upon a less obscure stage.

In any case, the advance towards the scene of hostilities seemed likely to be protracted to an extent which was trying alike to the patience of the officers and to the health of their men. The boats progressed very slowly up the sluggish, yellow river ; the heat was scarcely to be endured ; already sickness had broken out, and everybody, except Salem and his native comrades, was languid and a little discouraged. Melancholy, desolate plains stretched away to meet the horizon on the right hand and on the left ; from time to time a group of stunted palms and a glimpse of thatched huts showed where a native village was situated ; but, with these rare exceptions, not a sign of life, vegetable or animal, was to be discerned in that terrible, burnt-up land, which is apt to resent the intrusion of man by sullenly refusing him the means of maintaining his existence. To Raoul the whole thing had the effect of a huge funeral procession—differing only from other funeral processions in that those who formed it were deliberately attending their own obsequies. What an absurd tragi-comedy it was !—this dream of ultimately uniting Algeria with West Africa ; this insane rivalry amongst the European nations to secure what never could be worth securing ; this wanton, useless waste of human life. ‘If all these poor devils were like me,’ he thought to himself, ‘*à la bonne heure !*’ But it would be difficult to get together a battalion, or even half a battalion, of men who have lived as long as they wish to live. Even I, in spite of everything—even I dislike the idea of having a dozen blunt spears thrust through my body. Heaven grant that these savages may be armed with the rifles that we have heard so much of !’

But perhaps the perfidious English had been maligned, or perhaps the first hostile body which Colonel Davillier’s troops

encountered had omitted to profit by British perfidy ; for this combat was productive of a signal victory for civilisation. It took place on the day following that of the disembarkation of the force at a point where the river ceased to be navigable, and when the enemy had been put to flight, the victors had but few casualties to deplore. It was an affair of no importance, Colonel Davillier said ; still it had the effect of putting him and everybody else into a good humour, and the news, which was sure to spread rapidly into the interior, would, it was hoped, facilitate further operations.

Further operations entailed a slow, cautious forward movement across burning sands, in search of foes who remained persistently invisible. Every day the number of men who had to be sent back, invalided with fever or sunstroke, increased ; every evening the native spies and scouts returned to camp, reporting that they had nothing to report ; the suspense and the silence ended by telling upon the nerves of those who would assuredly be held responsible for a surprise or a disaster.

And yet, after all, they allowed themselves to be surprised. They had encamped, as usual, after taking all the ordinary precautions against a night attack ; Raoul, who had spent some time in his chief's tent, poring over a boldly speculative map, had gone to lie down and had at last fallen into a light, uneasy slumber. Then on a sudden arose a clamour which caused him to start up, with every sense on the alert. There was a wild discharge of firearms, a thunder of galloping hoofs ; shouts and shrieks resounded on every side ; Salem dashed excitedly into the tent, holding out a sword and a revolver. ‘ *Viens, viens vite ! Les Touareg !—les Touareg !* ’

The engagement which ensued beneath the stars and in the dim light of the coming dawn was rather a massacre than a fight. Colonel Davillier lay dead upon the sand in a pool of blood, his skull battered and his arms outstretched ; in a very brief space of time scarcely an officer remained who had not shared his fate ; there was nobody to take command, and even if there had been anybody, nothing could have been done with the men, many of whom had not even contrived to reach their arms, and who were flying, panic-stricken, in every direction—only to be cut down by their mounted assailants. The native *tirailleurs* alone made a stand, but were speedily overpowered. As for Raoul, he did what he could, but soon recognised the impossibility of doing

more than selling his own life dearly. At such moments a man does not ask himself whether his life is worth much or little, and Raoul, hard pressed on all sides by an indistinct crowd of horsemen in floating burnouses, fought with the fury of a wild cat. Salem, staggering and smothered in blood, but still erect, was at his elbow, and kept supplying him with fresh cartridges for his revolver; for several minutes—which of course seemed like half-an-hour—he managed to stand at bay and beat off those who charged down upon him. But he was completely surrounded, and he could no more have escaped than a spent fox can escape the overtaking hounds in the open. Presently a tremendous blow at the back of the shoulder—it was only a bullet, but it felt like the stroke of a sledge-hammer—brought him to his hands and knees; he rose for a moment, but instantly fell again, pierced and hacked by a rain of wounds, of which the pain cannot have been very great. The horsemen swept over his body and that of his faithful black attendant, in pursuit of fugitives. All was over; Colonel Davillier's force was absolutely annihilated, and doubtless it was as well both for him and for those who had served upon his staff that they were beyond reach of courts-martial. When catastrophes occur, somebody must needs be blamed, and it may be that the unfortunate officers who thus perished in the desert were to blame for doing so. It will be agreed, however, that Raoul de Malglaive, whether he merited blame or not, could not fairly be called unfortunate, seeing that he had found in the desert exactly what he had gone thither to seek.

A mere handful of men effected their escape, joined the rear guard and were eventually brought back down the river to St. Louis; but long before their arrival the bad news, travelling with the proverbial rapidity of bad news, had reached the Governor of Senegambia, whom it reduced well-nigh to despair.

‘It is only to me that such things happen!’ the poor man exclaimed; ‘I may say good-bye now to all hope of promotion. Nothing can be more certain than that I shall be severely censured for this—especially since not a single officer survives. And yet God knows that every order I gave was given in obedience to instructions! That unhappy Davillier!—what could he have been thinking of to get himself cut to pieces *à propos* of nothing at all! Oh, I pity him; certainly I pity him—and the rest of them. I deplore their fate. But, when all is said, it is a soldier's trade to die in battle. The injustice of it is that a civilian should be

condemned to die by slow degrees of fever in banishment, by way of atonement for a military mishap.'

It was hardly to be expected that a man so full of sorrow for himself and so preoccupied with drawing up regretful despatches should recollect the request of one unfortunate member of the late Colonel Davillier's staff; but there is no great trouble involved in dropping a letter into the mail-bag, and Raoul's last wish was duly complied with.

'One must suppose,' remarked the Governor pensively, 'that that young man was not in full possession of his senses. Naturally, he cannot have expected to die; yet he should have known that people who come out to this part of the world have no very sure prospect of living. And to come here voluntarily into the bargain! I am not, I hope, more of a coward than another; but I assure you it is not in Sénégal that I should be found if I had one half of the fortune which he is said to have left behind him!'

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### CHAPTER XXXVIII.

#### A RECEPTION IN CADOGAN GARDENS.

MR. DENT, who had been ordered to Hastings by his doctor to recover from bronchitis, did not get well quite as soon as he expected and wished, and was consequently disposed to be a little querulous in his comments upon the advice of that distinguished physician.

'Nobody but an ass,' he remarked, 'would send one down to a deserted watering-place in the middle of the winter by way of raising one's spirits. When a man reaches my time of life he is bound to have something or other the matter with him, and whatever he may have is pretty sure to be best adapted for home consumption. Besides, I have really no business to keep you in this deadly-lively hole when you must be sighing for the delightful and intellectual society that you have left behind you in London.'

Clarissa laughed, as she turned her head towards the old man who was seated beside her in an open carriage. 'How cross you are, Uncle Tom!' said she; 'that is a sure sign of convalescence. I am sorry you find it so dull here; but Hastings has done us all good, and you must admit that we get more sunshine here than we should in London. As for the intellectual society for which

you accuse me of pining, you know very well that I don't really like those people.'

'This is the first intimation to that effect that I have had from your lips, my dear. I was under the impression that you adored them.'

'Clarissa laughed again. Hastings had certainly done her good, if it had not accomplished all that it might have done for Mr. Dent. During that quiet, unmolested time with her uncle and her child she had been happier than for many months past; she had given her mind a rest, she had had somebody to take care of (which is what all women love) and she was quite willing to excuse an occasional outbreak of petulance on the part of her patient.

'Well,' she answered, 'of course I like them in a way. That is, I like them for holding the opinions that they hold, and for having the courage of their opinions. I never said that I was particularly devoted to them as individuals.'

'I am glad to hear that,' observed Mr. Dent pensively, 'because some of them seemed to me to be so dirty in their persons and nearly all of them are so ugly. I can't pretend to any accurate acquaintance with their opinions—of which they entertain a vast variety, do they not?'

'At all events,' said Clarissa, 'they are agreed upon what I consider the main point. And that is a question of such simple, elementary justice that I can't understand how anyone can honestly differ from them. Why on earth shouldn't a woman's position be the same in all respects as that of a man?'

'If you come to that,' returned Mr. Dent rather tartly, 'why shouldn't pigs have wings?'

Perhaps, as Clarissa had suggested, he was entering upon that stage of convalescence which is generally associated with irritability. Anyhow, he was determined not to be drawn into argument upon a subject which he had hitherto persistently declined to argue, and he cut short his niece's eager rejoinder with:

'It's no use, my dear; in me you see the embodiment of obstinate convinced Conservatism, and you would only waste your breath by reasoning with such an antiquated fossil. What makes me so disagreeable at the present moment,' he added, with a smile, 'is that I can't get on without any work to do, and that I doubt whether I am quite fit to return to work yet.'

'You are never disagreeable, Uncle Tom,' said Clarissa, laying her hand affectionately upon the old man's shoulder; 'but I am

sure you ought not to go back to your work until you are a little stronger.' She paused for a moment, and then resumed hesitatingly, 'Why should you not go down to Haccombe Luttrell for a time? It is a mild climate, and—'

'God forbid!' interrupted Mr. Dent.

'But, as the place is yours, and as it will have to be kept up, I suppose—'

'The place is mine, and it is being properly kept up. I am quite aware of my duties and responsibilities, which are both troublesome and expensive; but I don't include amongst them any obligation to visit personally a place upon which I shall in all probability never set eyes again. I am no more capable of filling poor Luttrell's shoes than he would have been of filling mine.'

Clarissa sighed. 'That seems a very unsatisfactory state of things,' she ventured to remark.

'Very unsatisfactory indeed,' agreed her uncle drily. 'Perhaps I am not altogether to blame for it, though.'

She understood what he meant. Had matters fallen out as he might reasonably have expected them to fall out at the time of her marriage, it would have been so natural for him to hand over the estate to her and her husband; and with his wealth the sacrifice could doubtless have been very well afforded.

'I wish——' she began, and then checked herself.

'May one be permitted to hear what you wish?' Mr. Dent inquired.

'I was only going to say that this Luttrell estate, which neither you nor I want, is wanted very badly by the man to whom, in a certain sense, it ought to belong, and—'

'Yes?'

'One hates talking to anybody about his will; it sounds as if one wanted him to die! But you know what a dreadful misfortune your death would be for me, and I want you to know—I have wanted to say this ever so many times—that I should think it a great misfortune to inherit Haccombe Luttrell.'

'I will bear your wishes in mind,' answered Mr. Dent; 'but I am bound to say, as a business man, that the course at which you hint does not commend itself to me. You would like, I gather, to see Sir Guy Luttrell in the enjoyment of the property which was held by his forefathers. So should I; but it is evident that, setting all other difficulties aside, this can only be accomplished

in one of two ways. Either I must die—and really I see no reason why I should not live for another ten or fifteen years, provided that I am not sent to Hastings again—or else— But we are to regard the alternative as out of the question, are we not ?'

‘ Quite out of the question, I am afraid,’ replied Clarissa decisively.

It was quite out of the question, and she was quite sure that it was not she who had rendered it so. Nevertheless, she was conscious that the two people for whom she cared most in the world, Netta and Uncle Tom, would have been considerably happier and better off if she could have brought herself to submit to or ignore what women have submitted to or ignored for generations. To avoid the conclusion (which was, of course, a false, though a plausible one) that she must be an exceptionally selfish woman, she had to fall back upon the old plea that she was fighting the battle of her sex, and that no omelette can be made without breaking of eggs.

At the end of another week she was set free to renew this noble conflict ; for Mr. Dent, who had now recovered both his health and his temper, was eager to return to business and to the House of Commons. Netta, on the other hand, quitted the seaside with deep regret, London having no attractions for her, save one—and that one she did not mention. Notwithstanding all the scrupulous precautions which Clarissa fancied that she had taken, the child had discovered that it was best not to mention her father’s name. She was a good little thing—rather subdued and old for her age, as an only child is apt to be—and she was already becoming a companion to her mother, who also would fain have prolonged their sojourn in a spot where companionship was less liable to interruptions than in London. But duty before everything ! When one has identified oneself with a great work one has no longer the right to neglect it.

Doubtless it was from a sense of duty that Clarissa, shortly after her return to Cadogan Gardens, sent out invitations for one of those receptions of hers which were always largely attended, and which were generally marked by certain features that distinguished them from ordinary receptions. Amongst those whom she had invited chanced to be Mrs. Antrobus, whose card she had found on the hall-table one day and to whom it seemed right to show this civility. Not that she was very anxious to see Mrs.

Antrobus again or to be reminded of days which had painful associations for her; but she presumed that, if her old friend should see fit to respond to the invitation, she would be discreet enough to avoid allusions to those days.

But discretion had never been a prominent characteristic of the excellent Mrs. Antrobus, who marched up the staircase with her accustomed military stride and greeted her hostess in loud, ringing accents, as of yore.

‘Well, how are you? Better in health than your husband, I should say, by the look of you. I met your husband in the street, the other day, and had a long talk with him.’

‘Indeed?’ said Clarissa chillingly; for she was painfully aware that at least a dozen persons who had grouped themselves round her were pricking up their ears.

‘Yes, indeed—and, to tell you the truth, that’s my chief reason for being here now. This sort of thing,’ continued Mrs. Antrobus, with a circular wave of her arm, ‘isn’t much in my line, and, having no daughters to take out, I don’t feel bound to go to parties when I’m in London; but I thought it would be an opportunity—’

‘Yes, exactly,’ interrupted Clarissa, hurriedly. ‘So good of you to come, and I shall enjoy so much having a chat with you about Mrs. Harvey and all the others! Only I think we must wait until a little later in the evening; just now I can’t very well desert my post.’

‘All right; I don’t mind waiting,’ answered Mrs. Antrobus, good-naturedly, as she passed on into the prettily furnished and lighted rooms where a heterogeneous assemblage was collected.

Clarissa’s receptions, as has been said, were of a nature to attract all sorts and conditions of men and women; since something unusual, in the shape of a speech or a recitation, was pretty sure to take place during the course of them, for the edification of the initiated and the amusement of the unregenerate. On the present occasion Mrs. Hamley, the popular authoress, had very kindly consented to read aloud a few passages from her latest, and as yet unpublished, novel. She had established herself in a picturesque attitude in Clarissa’s boudoir and was turning over the leaves of a type-written MS. when Mrs. Antrobus, following the set of the general current, came within sight and hearing of her. Mrs. Hamley was a pretty woman, who wore extremely pretty clothes. It was, indeed, chiefly in order to defray the cost of

those clothes (so she was wont to confess, in moments of expansion, to her intimates) that she had taken to writing novels which could not be described as exactly pretty. For the rest, she honestly believed that she was a highly talented writer, and if anything stood in the way of her doing full justice to her gifts, assuredly it was not a misplaced bashfulness.

When the room was as full as it could hold, and when silence had been obtained, she began, in a clear, pleasantly modulated voice, to read the description of an impassioned love-scene, which, though dissociated from its context, could leave no doubt in the minds of the audience as to the mutual relations of the personages concerned therein. To do Mrs. Hamley justice, she had a certain command of powerful and striking language, while her singular lack of reticence caused everybody to wonder what on earth she could be going to say next. That, perhaps, was the secret of her success. Having left her lovers at a point where it really seemed to be quite necessary to leave them, she hastily skipped a number of pages, and proceeded to draw a realistic picture of the death of one of them, under peculiarly unpleasant conditions. Not an incident of this unfortunate gentleman's last illness was omitted, not a detail of his malady was left to the imagination, and when at length he expired, Mrs. Hamley's hearers were too deeply impressed to applaud, save by a low, awe-struck murmur.

One of the audience—a tall, gaunt lady with a hook nose—did not even join in that respectful tribute. She snorted aloud, turned on her heel and, desecrating Clarissa, who was standing near her, plucked her by the sleeve.

'Come out of this,' said she; 'I want to talk to you, and I don't want to distinguish myself by being sick in public.'

'I must confess,' said Clarissa, while she was being hurried towards the unoccupied corner of the drawing-room upon which Mrs. Antrobus had her eye, 'that that last scene was rather disgusting.'

'Oh, it was simply filthy!—though I don't know that it was quite as bad as the first one. That woman ought to be dragged through a horse-pond or made to stand in the pillory!'

'I don't like Mrs. Hamley's books,' said Clarissa, 'and I am not even sure that some of her terrible descriptions are true; but—'

'There's no "but" in the question; you ought to be ashamed of having such a shameless creature in your house. I'm no

prude ; one doesn't command a regiment—at least, I mean one isn't a commanding officer's wife—for so many years without knowing what scamps some men can be. But, upon my word and honour, I believe the worst of them would blush to behave like your innocent-looking little friend in there ! What does she mean ? What is she driving at with all that nastiness ? I suppose the revolting death of the man was intended to be a sort of retribution for his sins ; but, by her own showing, the woman was every bit as bad. I have no patience with such indecent and immoral nonsense !'

Clarissa smiled—not being much affronted by this indignant outburst, so characteristic of the typical British matron.

' You take the good, old-fashioned view,' she remarked ; ' you stick to theories which, I quite admit, have been found to work out extremely comfortably—for men. But really the other view—the modern view—is not quite such tremendous nonsense as you think. There is a good deal to be said for it.'

There is indeed a great deal to be said in support of it, as most of us know, to our sorrow, and Clarissa started glibly with her too familiar thesis. However, she was not suffered to proceed very far.

' My good woman,' broke in Mrs. Antrobus, ' what is the use of talking like that ? You may talk until you are black in the face, but you won't alter the laws of Nature. Suppose men *do* have the best of it ; suppose it *is* better fun to be a man than to be a woman—what then ? You can no more make yourself into a man than the frog in the fable could turn himself into an ox ; and the result of these ridiculous claims on the part of women is only that they deprive themselves of the happiness which Providence meant them to enjoy. Take your own case, for instance——'

' I would rather not take my own case, please,' interrupted Clarissa.

' Very likely ; but I would rather take it. In fact, I am here to take it. Why are you going in for all this rubbish, which you don't really like and in which you don't really believe ? Why are you making yourself notorious, as well as ridiculous, by writing articles in magazines which nobody with a grain of common sense thinks of taking seriously ? Why are you thoroughly unhappy, in spite of your money and your cheap celebrity ? Simply because you have chosen to quarrel with a very good

fellow, who might have been a much better fellow if you had given him half a chance. Don't interrupt!—I'm going to have my say out, and then you can have yours. I don't deny that you had grievances; I don't deny that your husband gave you some reason to be displeased with him out in Ceylon; but what I do make so bold as to assert is that you were very nearly as much to blame as he was at the time, and that you are punishing yourself and your little girl quite as much as you are punishing him now. When Guy Luttrell joined us, I suppose everybody but you knew he had been rather wild in his youth, and some of us may have wondered what sort of a husband he was likely to make; but he was devoted to you—as indeed he is still, for the matter of that—and it only rested with you to domesticate him completely. Instead of doing that, you must needs put on airs of superiority and make home so dull for him that he was driven to seek amusement elsewhere.'

Mrs. Antrobus paused, not because she had finished, but to take breath, and Clarissa struck in with :

'I am sure you mean to be kind; but you only half understand. I could, and did, forgive my husband for many things which he did not seem to think required forgiveness; but there were others which made me feel that it was impossible for us to go on living together. Why you should say that he is devoted to me I cannot imagine; he is fond of Netta, after a fashion, I know. But if he had cared in the least for me, he never would have behaved as he did when—when—I dare say you have forgotten all about it—when my little boy died.'

'My dear,' answered Mrs. Antrobus, her hard face softening, 'you must not expect men to feel as we do about babies; it isn't in them. They think it a far greater misfortune to lose a good, faithful horse or dog, whom they knew and who knew them, than a squalling infant who is no more to be distinguished from other infants by their eyes than one thoroughbred is to be distinguished from another by mine. Besides, you won't make me believe that you have deliberately condemned your husband to go to the deuce for no worse offence than that.'

'I don't know what you mean by "going to the deuce,"' said Clarissa.

'You would if you saw him. That is, unless you are an even greater fool than I take you for. The long and the short of it is that the poor fellow is in despair. He *is* fond of you, whatever

you may be pleased to say, and you yourself admit that he is fond of the child. Well, he sees plainly enough that he is to be banished from you both for the rest of his days, and he has nothing to do, nor anything particular to live for. Consequently, as I say, he is going to the deuce—and I'm sure I, for one, don't wonder at it !'

‘It is quite impossible’—began Clarissa.

‘It is no such thing !’ interrupted the other. ‘For *him* to make advances would, I grant you, be almost impossible ; it was not by his wish that this split took place, and he could hardly sue for a reconciliation which would make him a rich man, as well as a happy one. But it wouldn’t cost *you* very much to put your twopenny-halfpenny pride in your pocket and send for him. What’s the sense of being miserable all round, when a few words would set everything right ?’

Mrs. Antrobus was by no means at the end of her arguments ; but at this moment Clarissa was called away, and the two ladies did not meet again that evening.

‘However, I’m glad I came,’ thought the elder, as she descended the stairs. ‘I flatter myself that I have done some little good ; and if that Hamley woman hasn’t made her see that the sooner she shakes herself free of this gang the better, why—nobody could !’

### CHAPTER XXXIX.

#### MR. LOOSEMORE SUSTAINS A REBUFF.

It was Paul Luttrell who, in a rather peremptory manner, cut short his sister-in-law’s conversation with Mrs. Antrobus.

‘If you can spare me five or ten minutes before I go away, I shall be much obliged,’ he said ; and Clarissa acceded to his request without demur, partly because she had fallen into the habit of obeying him and partly because she was glad of an excuse for leaving Mrs. Antrobus’s questions and representations unanswered.

However, she began to think that she had fallen out of the frying-pan into the fire when the Reverend Paul, after leading her into the now deserted boudoir, attacked her sternly with—‘Really, Clarissa, you are exceeding all bounds ! It just comes to this, that if you want decent people to come to your house at all, you will have to revise your visiting-list.’

'You mean Mrs. Hamley, I suppose,' said Clarissa; 'I am sorry she shocked you; but even if some of her writing isn't in quite the best taste, she is sincere, I think, and nobody denies, I believe, that her own life is perfectly respectable.'

'I know nothing about Mrs. Hamley,' answered Paul, who was looking very cross; 'I did not arrive until after she had concluded her reading—which, by all accounts, I am to be congratulated upon having missed. What I was not so fortunate as to miss was the recital of one of his own poems by your friend Mr. Loosemore. You were not in the room at the time, I noticed, and perhaps it is just as well that you were not. All that I can tell you is that, if he were to come down into my parish, where, as you know, we are not exactly mealy-mouthed, and if he were to dare to read such abominations aloud to a mixed audience of men and women, the men would chuck him neck and crop into the river before he reached the middle of his performance.'

Now, the truth was that some of Mr. Alfred Loosemore's poems were quite unfit for the ears of a mixed audience, and Clarissa detested them with all her heart; but she was tired of being scolded, besides being deeply dissatisfied with herself for having courted scoldings; so she only said:

'Dear me! Well, I hope for his sake, then, that he will refrain from visiting the East End. But I am afraid I can't promise to strike out the name of a great poet from those of my acquaintances because, according to you, he would not be appreciated by costermongers.'

'A great fiddlestick!' returned Paul contemptuously. 'If you don't know the difference between a poet and a man who has acquired a certain facility for melodious verse-writing, you have still a great deal to learn. And indeed, Clarissa, it is a melancholy fact that you still *have* a great deal to learn—little though you may be disposed to acknowledge it.'

'You have at least,' observed Clarissa, with pink cheeks, 'the comfort of reflecting that you never miss an opportunity of correcting my ignorance by telling me all that you know. But perhaps even that doesn't comprise the whole sum of human knowledge.'

'Perhaps not; but you must allow me to give you credit for being a little less well-informed than I am respecting Mr. Alfred Loosemore. Otherwise, I am convinced that you would never have permitted people to couple your name with his, as I am sorry to say that they are doing.'

‘Oh, is that it?’ said Clarissa, who was now thoroughly angry; ‘I thought it was only his poem that you objected to. Well, the next time you hear my name coupled with Mr. Loosemore’s, you can say that I consider it a great honour to be one of his friends. As we have been out of town, I haven’t met him for a long time; but I hope to see much more of him, now that we have returned.’

‘You must excuse my telling you that you are a very silly woman,’ said the Reverend Paul severely.

‘Must I? I confess I don’t quite see why. I should be sorry to have to remove your name from the visiting-list in which you take such a kindly interest; but really, if you claim the privilege of insulting me as often as you please, I shall begin to doubt whether I had not better begin the work of revision with you.’

Paul was given to being dictatorial, and he had been considerably ruffled; but he was not so foolish as to lose his temper.

‘Come, Clarissa,’ said he, ‘we mustn’t quarrel, whatever happens. I apologise for calling you silly, though I can’t say that I have changed my opinion yet. I shall change it, and admit as much very gladly, when you drop that fellow; and I am sure you would drop him if you really understood what he is. That poem of his was atrocious, and his having the face to recite it in your house was more atrocious still, in my opinion; but I ought to have remembered that you didn’t hear it. Please, forgive me if I spoke more rudely than I had any right to do.’

Clarissa accepted the olive-branch. After all, she was fond of her brother-in-law and had no wish to fall out with him. Moreover, she was not, in the depths of her heart, very far from concurring in his estimate of the poet. But friendly relations became endangered once more when Paul proceeded to deliver what he meant to be a very considerately worded little lecture upon the perils inseparable from her position. Some ladies might, he said, if their tastes inclined them that way, run the risk of receiving persons of evil reputation; but not a lady so young and so unfortunately deprived of any natural protector as she. To despise scandal and gossip was all very well; but it was neither wise nor right to give the scandalmongers an excuse, and what could any woman expect who showed herself in the Park with Mr. Alfred Loosemore lolling beside her in her carriage?

‘Ah,’ said Clarissa, drawing her brows together, ‘you have been talking with Guy, I see.’

‘Well, yes, I have been talking with him once or twice lately;

although it must be several weeks, I think, since he last mentioned—oh, here the man comes! I had better be off, or I shall be telling him what I think of him before I can stop myself. I was going to say a word or two to you about Guy; but that will keep. Shall I find you at home if I call, some day soon, between five and six o'clock?

‘Yes, I dare say you will,’ answered Clarissa, looking more resigned than delighted. Was he, too, going to preach to her that her duty was to set aside all her own plans and inclinations, in order that Guy might be saved from himself?

Mr. Alfred Loosemore advanced, with a slow step and an unctuous smile, to say what a charming evening he had spent and to take leave of his hostess. Clarissa always hated shaking hands with him, and was always glad if she happened to have a glove on when that form of salutation was gone through. At that particular moment she was, perhaps, less disposed than usual to pardon his little peculiarities; for she pulled her hand away from him, after he had held it for some seconds, and turned to say good-bye to somebody else before he had half finished what he had to say.

Presently she saw his broad back and his wiry head of hair disappearing through the doorway, while a few words of the bland gallantries which he was addressing to the lady at his elbow were wafted to her ears. ‘I think,’ she remembered Madeline saying to her once, ‘that he is a perfect pig!’ Well, one could understand that some people might view him in that unflattering light, and certainly there were times when he almost looked as if he deserved to be so viewed. At any rate, it was permissible to be angry with him for having displayed such a conspicuous lack of good taste as he appeared to have done that evening. In other words, Clarissa was angry with him, as well as with several other people, including herself, and under such circumstances it is always a comfort to be provided with a specific cause for complaint against somebody.

Consequently, she was not altogether displeased when, late on the ensuing afternoon, Mr. Alfred Loosemore was ushered into her presence. She did not want to see him; she wanted to go and sit in the nursery with Netta, who had been rather ailing and fretful since their return to London, and whom she had only just left, in order to write a few necessary letters. Still, since he had come, she would take that opportunity, she thought, of administer-

ing the rebuke which he had earned. So he had no sooner made himself quite comfortable in a very low easy-chair than she began :

‘I was not in the room when you were so kind as to read one of your poems aloud last night, Mr. Loosemore; but I am afraid, from what I heard afterwards, that you did not make a very happy choice. I hope, if you ever honour me in that way again, you will be a little more careful.’

‘Were they shocked?’ asked the poet, with languid amusement. ‘How nice of them! One so seldom gets the chance of shocking anybody nowadays—which is a distinct loss, you know.’

‘Is it?’ said Clarissa curtly. ‘Well, I suppose there will be no great difficulty about shocking people of average refinement so long as the highways and byways of every large town remain what they are now. I should have thought that you aimed at something a little higher and a little less easy of accomplishment than that.’

‘My dear Lady Luttrell, what have I done that you should accuse me of cherishing lofty ideals? Have I ever pretended to be anything but “the idle singer of an empty day”?—or should it be the empty singer of an idle day? I am ready to accept either adjective, because both are so entirely applicable to me; all I do deprecate is an unmerited charge of seriousness.’

‘If you really do not believe in what you affect to believe, I am sorry for it,’ said Clarissa coldly. ‘I, at all events, am quite serious.’

‘Of course you are; and nothing could be more becoming to you. I often wish,’ continued Mr. Loosemore, throwing back his head meditatively—‘might I light a cigarette? Thanks so much!—I often wish that I could get some capable artist to paint you, as you stand upon the platform, with those wonderful, short-sighted eyes of yours gazing far away above the heads of the nonentities who are listening to you, and as you declaim your delicious paradoxes with all the air of an inspired prophetess. I used to dabble in that form of art myself once upon a time—there are so few forms of art in which I have not dabbled! But I fear that my neglected capacities would be hardly equal to doing you justice. They considered me quite a promising pupil in Paris, I remember; still—’

‘Did they?’ interrupted Clarissa, who was less anxious to be entertained with Mr. Loosemore’s reminiscences than to elicit from

him an explanation of his remarks respecting herself. 'But what do you mean when you say that I declaim paradoxes?'

'Ah, now I have got myself into trouble! It is so terrible to be asked what one means!—and one never is asked unless one is so incautious as to stray from the safe path of obscurity. But, when you come to think of it, are we not all paradoxes? Is not life itself paradoxical?—and would it be half as delightful as it is, if it were not?'

'I don't think that life for the majority of the people is at all delightful, and I think that you are talking very great nonsense,' returned Clarissa, with some asperity.

'How charming you look when you are angry!' exclaimed the poet lazily. 'It is inexcusable of me to say things that make you angry; yet'—he waved his plump hand towards her, as she sat upright in her chair, frowning at him—'who could deny that there is my sufficient excuse!'

Now all this was extremely impertinent, and Clarissa was determined to let him see that she thought so. The personal compliments with which he had been so good as to favour her she preferred to ignore—for, after all, poets are not quite like other men, and it might appear rather silly and prudish to object to his putting his admiration into words; but she desired to be informed—yes or no—whether he was or was not in sympathy with the 'movement' which she and others had so much at heart. If not, she was sure that she might speak for her friends as well as herself in saying that they would rather dispense with his presence at future meetings.

'And indeed,' she was provoked into adding (for the broad smile with which this announcement was received was enough to provoke anybody) 'I do not quite understand what, in that case, can be the object or meaning of your visits to me.'

It was a positive fact that she did not understand; but to expect Mr. Alfred Loosemore to believe that would have been much the same thing as expecting him to believe that he himself did not understand women—which would have been palpably absurd. He at once made the reply for which he considered that he had been virtually asked; and made it in terms so unambiguous, accompanied by gestures so alarming, that for one moment he was in imminent danger of having his face slapped.

Happily, Clarissa regained control over her scattered senses in time to avoid so undignified a method of retaliation as that; but

in the matter of verbal castigation she did her best to give this impudent offender his due. Impenitent he was, and remained, after she had said all that she had to say. Worse than that, he remained incredulous. Very likely it was not in the man's nature to conceive that he had been welcomed and made much of in Cadogan Gardens merely because the mistress of that establishment was the victim of a fixed idea, and because—much more in joke than in earnest—he had ranged himself amongst the supporters of that idea. Very likely also experience had taught him that feminine rebukes should not be accepted too literally. So he rushed light-heartedly upon his own destruction.

'You make me feel like a very naughty boy indeed,' he declared ; 'but do I really deserve to be whipped or put in a corner? Can I help loving you? And, since I do love you, isn't it my duty, as well as my right, to say so? If that is not the meaning of the doctrine that you preach, then I have been sitting humbly and admiringly at your feet all this long time under a total misapprehension.'

'You most certainly have,' returned Clarissa, 'if you imagine that I have ever preached the doctrine that it can be any man's right or duty to speak of love to a married woman.'

'A married woman?—*allons donc!* Surely, if you meant to tell us anything at all, you meant us to understand that you were not that! I have always thought that your strongest argument against the institution of marriage—an argument in which I entirely agree—was that it prohibits, or professes to prohibit, subsequent *affaires de cœur*. We are seekers after truth, are we not?—and the truth quite evidently is that the heart of neither man nor woman can be restrained from obeying the voice of nature by a legal or a religious ceremony. Even if you and I had met some years ago, and if we had been man and wife at the present moment—'

'That will do,' exclaimed Clarissa, exasperated beyond endurance ; 'what I have said about marriage may have been misunderstood by some people; I have expressed myself badly and have conveyed false impressions, no doubt. But I really cannot plead guilty to having ever said or done anything to justify the extraordinary conclusion at which you appear to have arrived. I assure you that never—never by any possibility!—could we have been man and wife. The bare idea of my falling in love with *you*—or indeed of any woman's falling in

love with you—strikes me as being almost too ludicrous to be revolting !'

This very unequivocal statement had the effect of bringing conviction home to the soul of the poet. He rose, with such grace and dignity as he could command under rather trying circumstances, and prepared to take his departure.

' You are—pardon me !—a little bit inconsistent and just a little bit absurd, dear Lady Luttrell,' said he. ' You want, I gather, to run with the hare and hunt with the hounds—which is always a rather difficult performance to carry through successfully. Of course I apologise for having, as it seems, so completely mistaken the nature of your sentiments; but I really do not think that I owe any apology to Sir Guy Luttrell, or to you, as Sir Guy Luttrell's nominal wife. And I am sure you will agree with me that this interview had better be regarded as confidential.'

' I certainly do not feel inclined to talk about it,' answered Clarissa. And then, enlightened by a look of suppressed anxiety which she detected in Mr. Loosemore's eyes, ' Oh, I shall not request my husband to break your bones, if that is what you mean,' she added, with a scornful laugh.

But when her visitor had left her, Clarissa could not help thinking how Guy would have enjoyed lifting the poor creature up with one of his strong arms while he laid a hunting-crop across his back with the other. If Guy were only different in some respects from what he, unhappily, was ! If it were only true, as Mrs. Antrobus had ridiculously asserted, that he was still devoted to her ! At certain moments—when one is quite alone and when it cannot signify—one is apt to indulge in misgivings as to the wisdom of a course to which one is absolutely committed, and even to think of those by whom one has been injured with a leniency and an affection which it would be both foolish and dangerous to display before witnesses. Clarissa, for the time being, was feeling a little out of conceit, if not with the ' movement,' at least with the movers; while the unpleasant experience through which she had just passed made her feel, not unnaturally, that, as matters now stand, it is a hard thing for a solitary woman to fight her own battles. And everybody was against her !—Uncle Tom, Paul, Mrs. Antrobus—was it, after all, worth while to contend against these for the sake of Mrs. Hamleys and Alfred Loosemores ? If Guy had chanced to walk into the room at that critical juncture, there is no saying what might not have happened.

But it was not Guy who startled Clarissa out of a despondent brown-study ; it was Netta's nurse ; and the woman's face, as well as her voice, displayed a good deal of uneasiness.

'If you please, my lady,' said she, 'would you come and see Miss Netta ? She do complain so of her head and her throat, and she's that feverish I'm almost afraid she must be sickening for something.'

#### CHAPTER XL.

##### PALLID FEAR.

IT is all very well to hold advanced theories respecting the equality or inequality of the sexes, and to assert that if there be any difference between the two, it is only such as has been produced by the age-long tyranny of the one over the other ; but Nature always claims the last word, and a woman whose child is sick or in danger seldom fails to prove that Nature had her reasons for adopting a system which may not be wholly exempt from drawbacks.

Clarissa, forgetting all about the subjects with which she had been so preoccupied, rushed up to the nursery, three steps at a time, and was met, when she opened the door, by one of the saddest sounds in the world—the sound of a child's low, irrepressible sobbing. Netta was not much given to tears ; she had always been taught that such displays of emotion were unworthy and disgraceful ; but the pain in her head and her throat was so great that she had been unable to restrain herself, and now, on her mother's appearance, she hastened to offer a feeble little apology.

'I can't stop them, mother ; they *will* come !' she said, pointing ruefully to the heavy drops which trembled upon her eyelashes.

'What is it, my darling ?' asked Clarissa, taking the child upon her knee.

But that was just what neither Netta nor anybody else present could tell. 'Oh, I'm so bad !—I'm so bad !' was all that the small sufferer could moan, as she nestled down, with her head upon her mother's shoulder.

The nursery governess stood looking on sympathetically. She was a well-meaning young woman ; but she happened to be a fool,

and that was why she said, with the bland precision of utterance which she affected :

‘ To *me* this looks very like the beginning of enteric fever or diphtheria. I have been thinking so all day, and only just now I was saying to myself, “ How Netta reminds me of poor dear Archie just before his last illness ! ” I had a poor little brother who died of diphtheria two years ago, and my dear mother succumbed to typhoid. So, you see, I am not altogether without experience of these things, Lady Luttrell.’

‘ If there is any danger of an infectious disease, you had better go away at once, Miss Stevens,’ answered Clarissa, subduing a strong inclination to box the woman’s ears. ‘ Nurse and I can do all that is necessary until the doctor comes.’

But of course Netta wanted to know what diphtheria was and whether people always died of it ; so that while she was being put to bed, her nurse had some little trouble in reassuring her.

‘ Bless your ‘eart, no, my dear ! ’ Tis nothing but a feverish cold, I expect, and whatever ’tis, we’ll soon get you well again. Now, don’t you fret, but lay down, like a good girl, and see if you can’t get off to sleep, while me and your ma sends William to fetch the doctor.’

Netta laid her aching head down upon the pillow, as she was bid : probably she understood quite well why the nurse and her mother left the room for a moment. But nurse had no answer to give to the eager questions addressed to her by her mistress’s eyes.

‘ I really couldn’t say, my lady—not if you was to offer me a thousand pounds ! It might be measles or chicken-pox or one of a number of things—which all children has to go through them. But I don’t see no call to be uneasy yet, and as for that there Miss Stevens, she don’t set foot in Miss Netta’s room again, not while *I’m* there to drive her back—that she may depend ! ’

The nurse and the nursery governess had that love for one another which commonly subsists between such functionaries.

Clarissa was partially comforted for the time ; yet the doctor, when he arrived, could not or would not allay her apprehensions. It was quite impossible, he declared, on being begged at least to say that there was no risk of typhoid or diphtheria, to pronounce an opinion upon the case in its present stage. In all probability decisive symptoms would show themselves by the following morning, when he would return. For the moment, there really was

not much to be done ; though he would write a prescription which, he hoped, might relieve the child's head a little. Then he asked several questions as to where his patient had been lately, nodded rather gravely when he was informed that she had been away from home, and so left Clarissa to face as best she might some twelve or fourteen hours of agonised suspense.

She sat up in the nursery all through that long night, refusing to be relieved in her watch, and when she was not reading fairy tales or talking to the child, who dozed fitfully but did not obtain much rest, she suffered in advance every horror that could be in store for her. Typhoid, contracted at Hastings—that, she was sure, would prove to be Netta's malady, and that it would terminate fatally seemed to her, in those dark hours, to be a foregone conclusion. Clarissa had emancipated herself from the trammels of outworn creeds ; but this did not preserve her from a shuddering dread lest the impending calamity should fall upon her as a punishment for having left her child to the care of servants, while she herself was devoting her time and attention to the improvement of humanity at large. What with fear and what with self-reproach, she had made a sorry spectacle of herself by the time that the doctor reappeared in the morning, and he looked at her with surprise and disapprobation when he heard that she had not been to bed at all.

' This won't do, Lady Luttrell,' said he, drawing her aside, after he had made an examination of his patient ; ' you must take ordinary precautions, unless you wish to be the next victim, and if you have never had scarlet fever—'

' Oh, is it only scarlet fever ? How thankful I am ! ' exclaimed Clarissa. ' I felt certain that it must be something worse ! '

' Well, scarlet fever is bad enough to satisfy most people,' observed the doctor, smiling ; ' but, so far as one can judge at present, your little girl has everything in her favour. Only, if you insist upon helping to nurse her, as I suppose you will, you must obey orders, please ; and the first order I have to give you is to keep yourself in as healthy a state as you possibly can.'

Two days later, when the fever was running its course without complications, but had not reached its height, a card was brought to Clarissa, who had secluded herself from the rest of the household behind a barrier of sheets, impregnated with disinfectants, and she was informed that the gentleman who had sent it up wished particularly to speak to her, if only for a few minutes. She

was off duty just then, the trained nurse who had been engaged having taken her place ; so she advanced to the top of the staircase and called down to Paul Luttrell, who was standing in the hall :

‘ Netta is going on quite well ; but she can’t turn the corner for another three or four days, I believe. I mustn’t come any nearer to you, for I am full of the germs of scarlet fever.’

‘ Oh, no, you aren’t,’ returned Paul, who had come half-way up the stairs to meet her ; ‘ you won’t have any germs about you yet awhile. And if you had, I shouldn’t be alarmed ; I am constantly visiting scarlet fever patients.’

With a little persuasion, she was induced to descend and to accompany him into the drawing-room, where he sat down, remarking that he had had a rather long walk.

‘ And you promised to grant me an interview some day soon, if you remember,’ he added, smiling.

‘ Oh, yes,’ answered Clarissa ; ‘ but that was before this trouble came upon me. Nothing else seems to be of the slightest consequence now. If you were going to repeat the warnings that you gave me about Mr. Loosemore, you needn’t. I have found out that he is not a gentleman, and I shall not receive him any more. I hope you consider that satisfactory.’

‘ Quite satisfactory, so far as it goes,’ answered Paul. ‘ I wish, for your sake, that you had made the discovery a little sooner ; but that is a detail. The real object of my visit——’

‘ Oh, your real object wasn’t to inquire for Netta, then ?’ she interjected sharply.

‘ Of course I wanted to hear how Netta was ; and no doubt I could have heard from the servants, without disturbing you. But there is just one thing, perhaps, which ought to take precedence even of a mother’s duty to her child, and that is——’

‘ Oh, a wife’s duty to her husband, I suppose,’ interrupted Clarissa impatiently. ‘ But must I really be worried with all this now ? It is so useless, and I am so very tired of it ! Haven’t I listened meekly again and again to everybody who has thought fit to lecture me ?—and hasn’t everything that could be said upon the subject been said ?’

‘ I don’t know,’ answered Paul ; ‘ but I should think not. At all events, I have something to say to you now which I haven’t said before. I am going, for the first time, to appeal to your pity and to—what shall I say ?—your better feeling. You have dis-

carded, I believe—or you pretend to have discarded—the religion which seems to me essential and indispensable; but you must have filled its vacant place with some other more or less vague form of religion, and you will probably agree with me that no form of religion can be worth much which does not involve self-abnegation.'

'I know so well what is coming!' sighed Clarissa. 'Guy is falling into bad habits—as if idle men didn't always fall into bad habits!—and it is my business to save him from himself; isn't that it? But why am I to be singled out for this praiseworthy work? Was I so brilliantly successful at a time when I might have been supposed to have some little influence over him? Were his habits so exemplary in those days? I really cannot see why my pity or my better feeling should be invoked on such grounds. What I am perfectly conscious of is that he has been a heavy loser in point of money by our separation; but that is through his choice, not mine. I have always been, and I always shall be, ready and willing to surrender the half of what I possess to him.'

'And you must be aware that he will never be ready or willing to accept a sixpence from you. So far, his pride is absolutely right and justifiable, I think. As regards other matters, I don't say—his conduct may not have been exemplary, and he may owe it to you to ask your pardon. But, for obvious reasons, it would be a harder trial to his pride to make the first advance than it could be to yours. The truth, I firmly believe, is that pride and nothing else is keeping you two apart. You aren't happy, and by this time you have both found out that you can't be happy, apart; and just see the results of your pleasing experiment! You, for the lack of something better to do, are making your house the meeting-place of a set of grotesque libertines, while he—'

'Well,' said Clarissa, as the orator paused; 'what is he doing?'

'He is taking to drink, if you wish to have the fact plainly stated. What I have seen on more than one occasion lately makes it impossible for me to doubt that that is what he is doing—and indeed he scarcely denies it.'

'I am afraid,' said Clarissa coldly, 'that I have neither the skill nor the experience which are required for the reform of confirmed inebriates.'

'Now, Clarissa, don't take up that tone with me, whose trade it is to go to and fro from week's end to week's end among men

and women who have brought trouble upon themselves through their sins and their follies. I am neither to be snubbed nor deceived by such a very indifferent actress as you are. Guy is not a confirmed inebriate ; but he will end by drinking himself to death, all the same ; and if he does, you—and you alone—will be to blame for it. He is thoroughly miserable, and I suspect that he is thoroughly penitent into the bargain ; but he is much too proud to come to you and say so, and I think you ought to understand how difficult it would be for him to do that. That is why I appealed to your pity. Now I have obeyed my conscience and you must act as you please. Only one thing I am sure you will admit : if he wishes it, he has a right to see Netta.'

'But not now !' exclaimed Clarissa ; 'you forget the risk of infection. Why, I should not dream of allowing him to enter her room, even if he were living in the house.'

Paul laughed : Clarissa's words, as well as something which he saw in her face, had told him as much as he wanted to know.

'Whatever shortcomings may be laid to Guy's charge,' he remarked, 'cowardice, I believe, has never been numbered amongst them. It is not fear of infection that is likely to keep him out of his daughter's room when he hears that she is ill. He hasn't heard yet, I believe.'

'Then I do hope,' said Clarissa earnestly, 'that he will not be told. Why should he be told ? Of course, if there should be any'—she paused, and then brought out the word with an effort—'any danger, I would let him know. Yes, if that comes—but I pray and believe that it won't—I promise you that I will send for him at once.'

And that, upon subsequent reflection, seemed to her to be as much as any reasonable being could expect her to promise. She had been moved both by what Paul and by what Mrs. Antrobus had said ; she was sorry for Guy, and half, though only half, inclined to believe their assertions respecting him ; moreover, several things had worked together of late to shake her confidence in herself. But for that very reason she hastened to don a triple armour of obstinacy. She was resolved not to be vanquished by her emotions—those terrible emotions, against which she had so often made a point of cautioning others of her sex, and to which, in her opinion, the subordination of women was so largely due !

Nevertheless, it was not so easy to keep her emotions under proper control during the trying days which followed. Netta's

was a somewhat sharp attack of the fever ; the child's mind often wandered, and at such moments she would keep calling for her father in piteous, forlorn accents to which nobody could listen quite unmoved. To be sure, she never asked for him when she was in full possession of her senses ; but that was almost worse ; because there were occasional mute interrogations in her eyes, and because she had evidently realised that mention of him would not be welcome. Meanwhile, Clarissa was informed that Sir Guy called twice every day to inquire how his daughter was, although he sent no message and made no attempt to enter the house. It became necessary to sit down very calmly and dispassionately and call to mind indisputable facts, such as Guy's conduct in Ceylon, his ostentatious indifference respecting his wife's proceedings in London, his total lack of sympathy with the crusade to which she had committed herself. What could be more foolish or more futile than to consent to a patched-up reconciliation which, in the nature of things, must result in a second and probably more serious breach ? Besides, he had not asked to be allowed to see Netta, and certainly it would not be safe for him to do so. Perhaps, in her heart of hearts, she was a little displeased with him for omitting to make a request which she had resolved not to grant, while she was decidedly displeased with Paul for having told him of the child's illness. Under the circumstances, it would have been more sensible, as well as more considerate, she thought, to say nothing.

Possibly it would ; but any censure that may have been due to want of sense and consideration should have fallen upon Mr. Dent, who had been Guy's actual informant, and who insisted very strongly upon the propriety of pushing investigations no further than the doorstep.

' You could not be of the slightest use,' the old gentleman urged, ' and I am afraid you might be a good deal in the way. I suppose I am at least as nervous and as anxious as you are ; but, since it isn't in our power to help Clarissa, the next best thing for us to do is to refrain from bothering her.'

The truth was that Mr. Dent did not wish Guy to brave the danger of infection. Netta, he trusted, would shake off the malady, as children, when they are taken every care of, generally do, and would be none the worse for it ; Clarissa, too, must take her chance : there was no help for that. But there would be only a poor chance, he suspected, for a man of Guy's age and in Guy's

state of health. Mr. Dent, who saw many people every day and belonged to several clubs, knew very well what was wrong with Sir Guy Luttrell's health, and was not a little distressed by the knowledge; yet he wisely abstained from remonstrances. He knew other things besides; he knew, for instance (who relates such things? and through what devious channels do they end by reaching the ears of all whom they concern?) that Mrs. Antrobus had given Clarissa a well-deserved scolding, and that Clarissa had inflicted an equally well-deserved sentence of dismissal upon Mr. Alfred Loosemore. Consequently, he saw land, and held silently on his course, as he had done from the first, like the prudent old person that he was.

'When Netta gets well,' he told Guy, 'she will have to be taken away somewhere for change of air; but I should think they would be back in London by the beginning of the summer, and then you will be able to see her again. I can arrange meetings between you at my house, you know, as I did before; for you naturally won't care to call at her mother's house.'

'How do I know that I shall ever see her again?' the younger man asked rather hoarsely. 'How do I know that she is going to get well? It is all very fine for you, Mr. Dent; you talk at your ease; you have never had children of your own, and you don't understand. But this is trying me rather too highly, I can tell you; I don't promise that I shall be able to stand it much longer.'

'My dear fellow, what would you have? You don't, of course, propose to force your way into Clarissa's house now; and afterwards—well, it is unfortunate that her house doesn't happen to be your house; still such is the fact, and if she chooses to shut her door in your face, I don't quite see what you can do, except make occasional arrangements to meet your daughter elsewhere.'

This was a little cruel of Mr. Dent; but his motives have been mentioned, and he was just as well aware as Paul was that his apparently easy-going companion was an intensely proud man. In any case, Guy's forbearance was not to be put to the test much longer; for one evening, when he presented himself as usual in Cadogan Gardens, the butler, instead of answering his question, said :

"Would you please to step in, sir; her ladyship would like to speak to you.'

'Is anything the matter?' asked Guy apprehensively. 'Is Miss Netta worse?'

The man looked down. 'I believe the doctor don't speak quite so hopefully to-day, sir,' he replied.

So Guy, with blanched cheeks and a tremor of the limbs which he could not subdue, crossed the threshold, prepared for the very worst.

*(To be continued.)*

